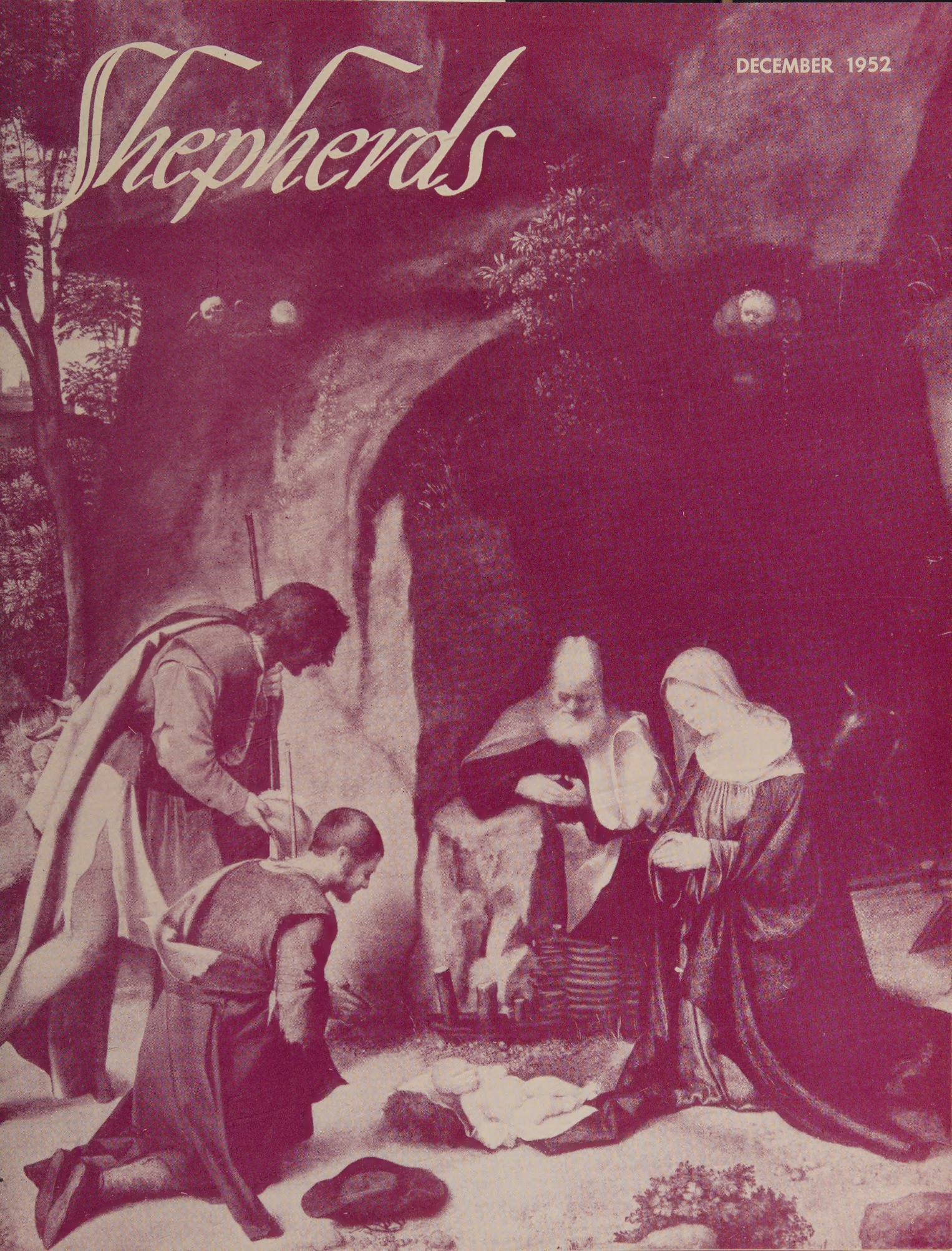
# Shepherds

DECEMBER 1952



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SHEPHERDS

For Commission on Membership
and Evangelism in the Local Church

December, 1952
Vol. 7—No. 3

Geo. H. Jones, *Editor*
Gordon Pratt Baker, *Editorial Associate*
John G. Walton, *Director of Promotion*
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TIDINGS, 1908 Grand Avenue
Nashville 4, Tennessee

Chairmen of the Commissions on Membership and Evangelism in local churches, whose names and addresses are available, receive *Shepherds* each month free of charge. Pastors, District Superintendents, and District and Conference Secretaries of Evangelism are requested to report these names and addresses, giving the name of the church, charge, District, and Conference.

*Total circulation this issue, 50,000*

Individuals may subscribe at the rate of $1.50 per year. Churches may furnish *Shepherds* to the members of their Commissions on Membership and Evangelism at the rate of $1.00 per person, for 10 or more persons.



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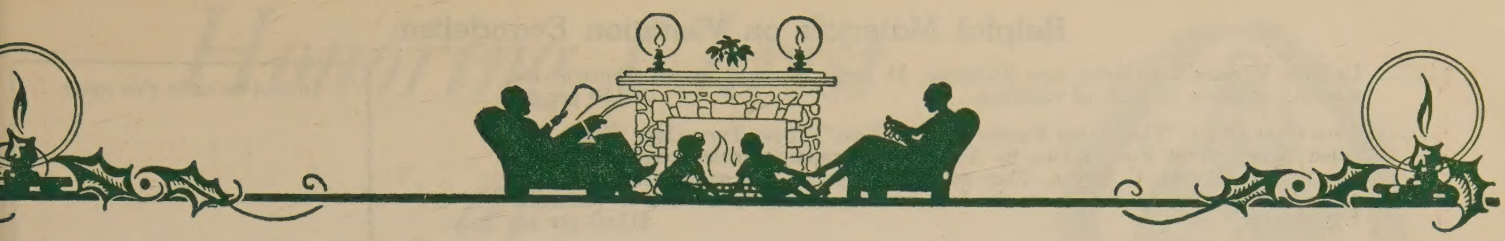

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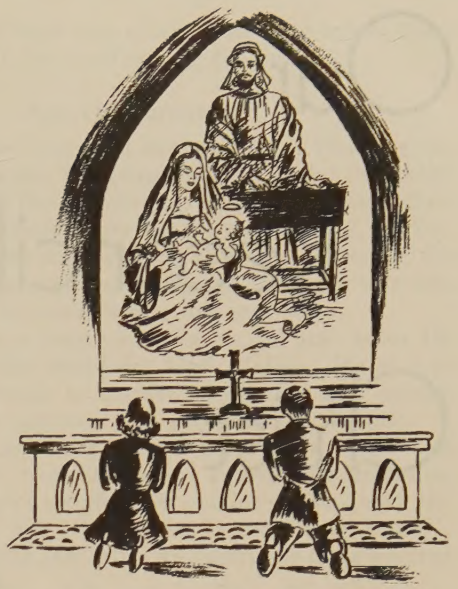
# *Honoring Christ at Christmas*



*by Clifford G. Sinnickson, Pastor*
*Schultz Memorial Methodist Church*
*Cranbury, New Jersey*

Not long ago I was visiting in a home where there was a five- or six-year-old boy. He was telling me, very happily, of his great confidence that Santa Claus would bring him certain prized gifts, and he was enthusiastically anticipating them. I listened attentively.

Finally, taking the boy on my knee, I said, "Son, you know whose birthday comes on Christmas Day, don't you?" He hesitated a few seconds before he answered. "Sure," he said, "it's the birthday of Santa Claus."

Before we laugh too loudly, let us be very sure that the boy was not merely reflecting the unspoken, uncritical attitudes assumed by our modern culture. For we live in a culture all too largely dominated by pagan assumptions rather than by Christian creed and conduct. Christmas, let us remind ourselves again, marks the greatest event in the history of the world: the birth of the greatest man ever to bless the earth with His presence—Jesus Christ, whom Christians believe to be the divine Son of God.

### An Excuse for Confusion

A visitor from Mars could be readily excused for any confusion he might experience if he were to visit America this Christmas season. We would tell him that this season marks the birthday of Christ. We would acquaint him with the major facts in the life of Him whose birth we celebrate. We would describe how He went about humbly doing good to all people, without display, pomp, or ceremony; how He cured people of divers diseases; how He drove demons from people's minds and spirits and brought peace to their souls. We would tell how He died. We would assert with confidence that He conquered death, and that because He lives, we, too, shall live. We would say with assurance that this man has revealed God to us and that we gladly give Him our full allegiance.

But if we should take our visitor from Mars through any American city, we would find great throngs of people crowding department stores in what is euphemously called the "spirit of Christmas" to send sales soaring higher and higher. There they would receive the blessing of a Santa Claus whose union permits him to dispense kindly greetings for nine hours a day—with an hour out for lunch, of course. Across the streets of the main shopping sections we would find gaily decorated lights that would have done justice to the garden parties of ancient Rome. In many offices and homes we would find parties where the Greek god Bacchus was worshiped with a frenzy equal to that which characterized his ancient devotees. And almost everywhere we went we would examine greeting cards expressing sentiments which would not tell us whether we were celebrating the birth of Christ or the birth of Confucius.

"Silent night, silent night," would blare from the loudspeakers on every corner. "Did I hear aright?" the visitor from Mars would ask. "Are they singing *silent* night?" "Yes," we would answer, "they are singing *silent* night."

Once Christmas Eve *was* a silent night. It was silent because men and women were meditating concerning the meaning of Christ's birth for their lives and for the world.

But it is not a silent night any more. We live in an age which must be stimulated or die of boredom. So we stimulate people in many ways. One way in which we stimulate them is through noise and constant distraction. "But for what purpose do you stimulate people?" the visitor from Mars would persist. "That question," we would answer, "requires thought; and the holiday season is no time to think."

### "A Strange World"

"You live in a strange world," our interplanetary traveler would say. "We are more consistent in our planet. When we celebrate a man's birthday we honor him. But, then, I suppose we are more backward than you."

How can we honor Christ at Christmas? The answer is simple—so very simple. We must be more Christlike. We must pledge Christ our allegiance and loyalty. We must do unselfish things for those who will never be able to do anything for us in return, except, perhaps, to give us their undying gratitude and Christian love. The only way to honor Christ on His birthday is to honor Him with our lives all the year through.

# Our Reconciling Christ

By Gordon Pratt Baker

In his letter to the Galatians, the Apostle Paul reminds us that Christ's human adventure was strategically planned. Jesus came not at some isolated point in time, but at the very focus of history, and to the very place where the world's transforming truths coincided. His cross marked the spot so that successive generations might never forget His central uniqueness (Galatians 4:4-5).

### Geographically Central

Highly significant is the fact that Christ was born at the point where the continents meet. For He conducted His ministry in that part of the world which conjoins Asia, Africa, and Europe.

Already, by the time of Christ's coming, Alexander the Great had built roads, established imposing cities, and implanted the Greek culture and language so effectively that Greek was the universal tongue and the Greek hunger for knowledge was the universal spirit. Even the Old Testament had been translated into Greek for the benefit of educated Jews living in Alexandria; while other sons of Abraham, fascinated by the Greek outlook on life, had written such books as Ecclesiastes and The Wisdom of Solomon. In fact, so deep-rooted was this unifying influence that the story of the Exodus was made the theme for Greek drama.

It is not without reason, therefore, that John tells us of "certain Greeks" who, asking to see Jesus, inspired the Master to declare: "The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified" (John 12:20-23).

Where the Greeks left off, the Romans took up the task of unifying the world. In no small measure they accomplished this by a network of roads which was established, primarily, of course, to insure the success of their conquest, but which inevitably encouraged intellectual and commercial intercourse on the part of widely scattered peoples. The extent of that network becomes apparent when we read in Pliny's *Natural History* how healing herbs were transported from the Sea of Azov, from "beyond the pillars of Hercules, where Nature herself ends," and from the British Isles, which, for all practical purposes, were virtually outside the world itself.

Not only were these roads extensive in number, they were also so excellent in character as to be unmatched until the Nineteenth Century. In addition to all this, the highways were so well policed that hold-ups were kept to an absolute minimum.

Never before had the world offered such convenient or secure passage to the servants of the living God. Thus, Jesus conducted His ministry in the very center of an empire which, fulfilling its ancient heritage, had all unwittingly guaranteed Him the world as His parish.

### Cross Tides of Culture

Changing geography is always associated with changing ideals, for men cannot expand their horizons without expanding their minds. Toward the end of the Thirteenth Century, for example, Marco Polo's glowing tales of a golden island, which we know as Japan, set the whole Western world to tingling with visions of an economically richer age.

The period in which Jesus worked could have been no different in its basic experiences. The law of growth is the same in every century and in every stage of civilization. Consequently, the redemptive strategy of the Almighty is apparent in the fact that Christ came at the point where the cultures meet.

In the unified world which Rome had established, men could barter in markets at the farthermost ends of the earth. Invariably, when they exchanged goods they exchanged ideas. They inquired; they compared; they appraised; they challenged—and they philosophized. As a result, the foundations of their contemporary faiths had begun to tremble.

Fearfully at first, but driven by a moral imperative which they could no longer deny, they had begun to question the old ways of life. And they discovered that ancient standards did not meet present needs.

The gods whose power they once revered stood unmasked as immoral reflections of human weaknesses. Yet the philosophers, whose probings often drew so close to divine truth that they all but anticipated Jesus, were strangers to the simple tongue of the common people; and, for all their nobler insights, they were unable to make their discoveries generally known. Plato, for example, could see earth as

but the shadow of heaven; and Posidonius, only a half-century before Christ's birth, could observe in the human search for God the surest evidence of man's divinity. But neither philosopher was able to share his transforming vision with the man upon the street.

To make matters worse, the trade caravans had imported a host of alien cults which, like vultures hovering over a corpse, were only the bearers of evil portents. Thus, the Syrian stellar religion had proclaimed the inescapable power of "the life-inclining stars." Come what may, events had no meaning other than that which the shifting constellations might ordain; and individuals were totally without point or purpose.

In the midst of such melancholy predictions, magicians practiced their black art to the terror of all who watched them; demons infested every nook and cranny of the commonplace; and death haunted a frightened people constantly seeking to fly from it and forever aware that they could not escape.

To be sure, the Eastern mystery religions offered salvation through physical and spiritual escape from terror by means of an intricate substitutionary process. But liturgy was still far removed from life, and formulas cannot supply faith. So on every hand Despair was King, and he ruled because he had established his throne at the center of the world.

But also at that vital core, awaiting a Spokesman who should use such simple language that even children would rejoice to hear Him, lay the spiritual experience of the Hebrew people.

Israel had made a covenant with the God who held in His hands the blueprints of history. Not chance, but a sure and vital purpose empowered the course of human events. Not the favoritism of some unpredictable force, but the justice of a deity who has a personal stake in life must ultimately shape the world's design.

As the great exponent of Israel's hard-won faith, Jesus came into the cosmic court where Despair was King and, by the sheer power of sacrificial love, dethroned the tyrant.

## Above the Strife of Class

Geographical and cultural centrality, however, are not the total explanation of the redemptive ministry of Jesus. Important though they are, in themselves they still are not enough. Thus, pursuant to the divine plan, Christ came at the point where the classes meet.

Born of the line of David, He could have claimed a priestly heritage. The hierarchy of His day was the aristocracy of His world. Caiaphas associated easily and influentially with Pontius Pilate. Jesus could have joined that materialistically illustrious company merely by seizing His birthright. That He won friends among them is attested by the deferred discipleship of Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea.

But He was also a laboring man. As a carpenter, He was a "poor man toiling with the poor." Half-orphaned at an early age, He knew the burden of supporting a large family with meager means. When He spoke, therefore, it was with the authority of one who had experienced the deprivations common to the underprivileged of His day.

Few men in history have been qualified to touch the lives of all classes of men. Bound by their group loyalties, they normally favor one class and condemn another. Pre-revolutionary France and post-revolutionary Russia are classic examples of such extreme incompatibles.

Only one who had legitimate claim to all classes could transcend their respective prejudices to establish their ultimate salvation. Christ was a carpenter-king whose heart beat as one with all the creatures of the earth.

## Age No Barrier

Still we do not have the final explanation of His magnificently redemptive work. Geographical and social centrality go far toward laying the foundations of spiritual revolution, but they are more preparatory than productive of it. Yet, by dispensing with certain barriers, they make possible the elimination of others even more difficult. Because this was so, Christ came at the point where the ages meet.

Jesus was neither a young man nor an old man when He set out to reclaim the world for God. Rather, He was in between. Young enough to inspire youth, He was mature enough to persuade age with His revelation of divinity.

It is no coincidence that the youthful John Mark and the venerable Peter were numbered among His disciples. The Rich Young Ruler sought Him out for counsel with the same confidence as did Nicodemus, "a master in Israel"; while children clung to His skirts as eagerly as their parents clung to His words.

Here was something new in sages. Here was no infirm old man philosophizing in the twilight years. Here was no immature stripling concocting the imaginary visions of wishful youth. Here was a Messiah who combined the enthusiasm of the one with the seasoned experience of the other. Here was a Redeemer who could use apparently foreign sympathies to transform life. No other philsopher-king shares Christ's agelessness.

## Where Color Fades

One by one, geography, culture, and chronology had become His invincible allies. But the Christ who could claim all countries, all classes, and all ages must prove His claim through a signal distinction which would forever set Him apart from all other men at the same time that it forever bound Him to them. So the strategy of a wise Providence ordained that Christ should come at the point where the colors meet.

Confucius must always associate with the Orient. Socrates must always constitute a part of Occidental tradition. But Jesus must incorporate both. And He must do it because He was neither black, nor white, nor yellow, but a blend of all three.

Because He had the olive pigmentation of the Hebrew, He was readily accessible to men of all races.

A black man carried His cross when He fell beneath its weight. An Italian centurion acknowledged His Lordship when He died with a prayer upon His lips. Members of all races, gathered in Jerusalem for the high holiday, stood witnesses to His last full measure of devotion.

We can think of some individuals as great Greeks, or great Romans, or great Chinese, or great Americans; but we can think of Christ only as the Redeemer of the world.

## Hope of Earth and Heaven

Geography, culture, class, chronology, and color had thus combined to make Jesus central. One other factor was needful to make Him forever unique. So God sent Christ at the point where the characters meet. For He entered human experience as an infant. Like any other child, he was loved by a mother's heart, fed by a father's hand, protected by generous friends, and destined to pass through all the normal stages of growing up.

How natural were His struggles with temptation, His expressions of sympathy and faith, His prayers for strength and for deliverance from a difficult lot! Was He ever more

human than in the moment when His angry whip lashed the money-changers from the holy Temple?

But was He not also divine when He saw in a rough and tumble fisherman the stuff of which saints are made? And how else could He discern behind the veil of sin that implicit faith which empowered Mary Magdalene to rise above the evils that had so completely engulfed her?

Human in His passions, He was divine in His perceptions; and when He appealed to individuals to enlist in the task of reshaping the social order according to God's sacred design, He did so confidently on the basis that "the kingdom of heaven is within you."

It is hardly coincidental, therefore, that men identify with God the one man in all history who completely identified Himself with humanity. Truly, "in Him all things cohere."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# Evangelistic Opportunities at Christmas


## by Joseph Owen
## Main Street Methodist Church
## Gastonia, North Carolina


All the seasons furnish evangelistic opportunities. Some give larger promise as a time for an intensive, cooperative program than do others. Christmas, it seems to me, is a time specially conducive to the creation of an atmosphere friendly to evangelistic appeal and effort. There are ways in which the significance, as well as the approach, of Christmas can be effectively brought to the attention of people, young and mature.

*The minister can preach toward Christmas.* He can catch up into his emphasis something of the hope and expectations which belonged to the prophets as they longed for a coming One and a better day. Or, anticipating special emphasis on Christ's coming as a divine invasion of human life, he can discuss the needs of the world into which Christ came and some of the accompaniments of the Manger birth, and thus give accent to the central event itself.

*The literature of the church school usually prepares* those who give careful study to it for a deepened appreciation of Christmas. Pastors and church school leaders can assist this emphasis by encouraging programs of giving prompted by the self-giving of the Christ. I know a teacher of beginners who always has a Christmas program in which the little folks give gifts rather than receive them. They enjoy the program and I am sure they come to a better understanding of God's supreme gift to the world along that way.

It has seemed helpful to me to get *the Gospel accounts of the birth of the Christ,* the shepherds' journey "even to Bethlehem," and the visit of the Wise Men before groups meeting in midweek services, and especially before youth groups. Pictures will aid a program of that sort. I have also seen fine results by urging the adults to read daily, during the week preceding Christmas, the prologue to John's Gospel.

It has been a habit with me to *anticipate Christmas by the use of the great Christmas hymns.* It is not necessary to wait till the "silent night, holy night" is upon us to sing about it. As is true of Easter hymns and anthems, perhaps the great Christmas music ought to be sung during all the seasons of the year.

Most pastors, I presume, have had parents come to them with the problem of the traditional "Santa Claus." With a "Santa" in one store after another, with two or three on the streets at the same time, noticing that some are tall and some low in stature, some stout and some thin, a good many children are coming to feel that there is something wrong with the whole "Santa Claus" idea. Without entering the ranks of reformers in such matters, a minister may urge upon the mothers and fathers of the church that they should major in telling the story of the Christ child. It is a good time for such an exhortation. I know of a little girl of very tender years who was much impressed with the story. Her father had been away for more than two years in overseas military service and she seemed deeply touched that there was no room—no home as she understood it—for Christ in the inn. *We may legitimately urge that the Christ of Christmas be put at the center of our Christmas thinking.*

My own heart has been stirred by the wide acclaim that has been given to *the Christmas story by radio* in recent years. Sometimes the "air" seems literally filled with "Noels," the "Little Town of Bethlehem," the "Hallelujah Chorus," and the rest. It is a great time for the preacher to repeat tenderly the words of tiny Tim: "God bless us every one!"

It is a good time, too, to *talk about "Christmas in God's calendar,"* when, after the preparation of centuries, God sent His own Son into the world. The minister shall find a thousand supporting influences when he stands up to proclaim Christ as "Emmanuel—God With Us."

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**CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SUGGESTIONS**—A folder of suggestions for the family's observance of Christmas has been prepared by the Department of the Christian Family of the Board of Education. "Christmas Worship in the Home" is a four-page folder with a colored picture of "Long, Long Ago," by Brisley. The folder contains a table grace for the Christmas season, special prayers and poems for use during December, and suggestions for making Christmas a holy day. A brief worship service, for use in the family Christmas Day, is on the fourth page. This Christmas folder has been planned for widespread distribution throughout the Church.

Minister and church school leaders may order "Christmas Worship in the Home" from the Service Department, Board of Education, Box 871, Nashville, Tennessee. Price, $2.00 for 100, 30 cents for 12. Send cash with order.

# The Upper Room Radio Parish Offers A Unique Series for the Advent Season

## *Let Us Give Thanks*

*A New 30-Minute Dramatic Episode For Family Listening Thanksgiving Day*

### PURPOSE

This special event program is especially written and produced for good listening for all the family on Thanksgiving Day. The program aims to give dramatic emphasis to the real meaning of Thanksgiving and its historical significance as a great American Christian festival of the home. The drama is rich in historical lore.

### SYNOPSIS

The Christian family, a hearty, happy American family that may be very much like your own—or like that of someone you know—is making mighty preparations for Thanksgiving. In the midst of preparing mince pie, turkey and all the fixings, Mary and David, the youngsters of the family, ask: "Is that why we have Thanksgiving?—so we won't fight each other because we eat so much we don't feel like it?" John, the father, tells them the story of the Pilgrims and the first Thanksgiving.

In a dream sequence, the children find themselves back in Plymouth with Governor Bradford, the Pilgrims and the Indians.

The children declare for a real religious Thanksgiving—just like the Pilgrims. The story ends with the family joyously joining in the blessings as they sit down at their Thanksgiving table.

### RUNNING TIME

Twenty-nine minutes, recorded on two 33 1/3 R.P.M. 16-inch discs, back-to-back with Christmas records.

### SCHEDULED FOR BROADCAST

Thanksgiving Day, November 27, 1952, on local option programmed on firm commitment of time, so that the programs may be given publicity.

### COST

Recordings from The Upper Room Radio are loaned free to radio stations and religious sponsors.

### HOW TO ORDER

The entire Holiday Series is offered as a package to stations making a firm commitment of time.

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*Six Fifteen Minute Programs for Thanksgiving Through Christmas Holidays*

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*Theme Music for each program:*
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I Know Not How That Bethlehem's Babe
Fairest Lord Jesus
Song of the Infant Jesus
Gesu Bambino

#### II. THE COMMONPLACE

The First Noel
O Come All Ye Faithful
Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne
Jesus, Jesus, Rest Your Head
Love Was Born at Christmas
He Is Kings of Kings

#### III. CHRISTMAS JOY

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing
Harken All What Holy Singing
Sing We All Noel
While by Our Sleeping Flock We Lay
Joy to the World
While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks

#### IV. SHEPHERDS

Silent Night, Holy Night
Shepherd's Christmas Song
Angels From the Realms of Glory
It Came Upon the Midnight Clear
Shepherds Quickly Awake

#### V. GIVING

We Three Kings of Orient Are
O Holy Night
There's a Song in the Air
A Christmas Fantasy
As With Gladness Men of Old
While Stars Their Vigils Keep
O Little Town of Bethlehem

#### VI. PEACE

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear
Christmas Bells
Sweet Little Jesus Boy
Hark! the Herald Angels Sing
O Come, O Come Emmanuel
A Christmas Prayer

## *Christmas Is a Holy Day*

*A 30-Minute Dramatic-Musical Presentation for All the Family on Christmas Day*

### PURPOSE

This second episode, which presents the same family, is related to the Thanksgiving Program. It aims to dramatize and make meaningful to the average family the true meaning of Christmas.

### SYNOPSIS

Our story opens with the family on Christmas Eve, making final preparation for the celebration of Christmas. It is a typical American family, warm and friendly, but utterly swamped in the frantic preparation for the holidays. The eldest daughter, Ruth, is caught up in the gay social whirl of holiday parties. David, 11, is hinting hard for a new bike. The radio brings the Christmas carolers into the home with the old familiar carols. Mary, 7, brings the family up short with her question, "Daddy, does Jesus believe in Christmas?"

The family turns to the familiar story in Luke as a part of their Christmas observance. As the father, John, reads from the Bible, the voice of the narrator crossfades for a dramatic flashback and re-enactment of the story of Christmas. The Christian family learns what it means to "keep a good Christmas."

### RUNNING TIME

Twenty-nine minutes, transcribed on two 33 1/3 R.P.M. 16-inch discs.

### SCHEDULED FOR BROADCAST

For broadcast on Christmas Day, December 25th, 1952, at a time when the program may be heard by family audiences, preferably in the same slot as the Thanksgiving program.

### COST

This program, which is a part of the package program series for the holidays, is provided without charge for public service broadcast.

### HOW TO ORDER

The entire Holiday Series will be sent to radio stations or civic or religious sponsors on loan.

for further information:

Radio Stations and Churches or Church Groups sponsoring radio programs are invited to communicate with

**1908 Grand Ave.** **The Upper Room Radio Parish** **Nashville 4, Tenn.**

# NEEDED: An Evangelistic Christmas

By Bishop Hazen G. Werner, Ohio Area

It was the afternoon before Christmas. The scene was a ten-cent store in the city. People were milling about, and there was a buzzing of voices. Now and then the clang of the cash register added to the noise. Suddenly, down one of the aisles of the store came a man, carrying a tiny boy high on his shoulders and calling out, "Here is a boy that is lost! A boy is lost!" He was lost all right. He was bewildered and afraid.

Amidst all that heaped-up colorful immensity of tinsel and toys, talking dolls, tiny trucks, clowns with moving hands, and the endless sundry of things to eat and to wear and to play with—a boy was lost.

In a world just like that, men and women are lost—really lost. Their souls are smothered under heaped-up things that they can buy, eat, wear, and play with.

The annual income for Americans for the year 1951 climbed to the dizzy heights of two hundred and fifty-one billions of dollars. This was twenty-six billion more than the American people had received in the year 1950. People had more money—more possessions—but less of God and less of the spiritual blessing of living by His word and in His presence. People of America are lost as surely as that boy was lost on that pre-Christmas day.

## What Better Word

Our fathers talked about worldliness. What better word is there for us now? We are lost in worldliness, in pleasure, and in plenty. And what does that lead to? Look at the sad breakdown of public morality. A number of public officials have been dismissed or have resigned from office for malfeasance. It is reported that 47 per cent of the undergraduates of a great university admitted cheating in their exams. Chain stores report an alarming increase in theft. In addition, we are drifting into "a cult of violence," as one man puts it.

How are we in America going to eliminate all that? To do so will require a change of heart which must begin with each one of us. Wherever we are, we must realize that, as Christians, we are a part of the faith which is set to win men and women to the Christian life in a desperate, earth-shaking day. Are we up to it? Our Christ may be saying to us, as He said to the Rich Young Ruler, "One thing thou lackest." "We are too Christian," said Peter Marshall, "to enjoy sinning, and too fond of sinning to really enjoy Christianity." That is at least one way of describing our dilemma. Many of us are not up to what is expected of us in this matter of winning others.

What are we going to do about it? What are we doing today—this week—to witness for Christ and to win others to Him? God cannot detour around us in order to reach people. He must work through us.

The evangelizing of life must begin with us. Just as in our gardens we begin to hoe where our feet are at the beginning of the row, so we must begin evangelizing where we are. We must begin with ourselves. Even now Christ is saying to us, as He said to Peter in that amazing far-off day, "Lovest thou me?", and then after a pause, "Feed my sheep."

## The Undergirding Life

Having done that, we must evangelize our church. Redemptive zeal will have to possess our church. Evangelism is not one of the many activities of the church. Evangelism is the undergirding life of the church—the intent of the total of all the activities of the church. Is that true of our church? If not, let us start today as people and pastors to permit the Lord to have His way with our church.

## Church School Evangelism

For example, we need an evangelism that will move through the church school, through the teacher, and through the teaching of the church school.

I ask you, why should not a six-year-old child be made to understand that the real meaning of Christmas is that God gave us His Son as a Saviour? ". . . and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." Did not the angel say: "Unto you is born this day a Savior which is Christ the Lord"? Why should not teachers, and parents, and all who have to do with the nurture of children give large emphasis to what Jesus' coming into the world means for the redemption of men?

## Evangelizing Our Youth

We also need an evangelism that will move through the youth organization. Instead of a travelogue, a film on plastics, or a talk on football coaching for an M.Y.F. program on Sunday evening, why not lead our young people to face the fact that nowhere is Christ so needed, or so difficult to follow, as in the world of youth? Why not lead them into a fuller realization of what it means that Christ has come to the world of youth? Why not challenge them to stand firm in a hard world with courageous, decent, and holy living and to summon one another to be dedicated to that kind of life?

Likewise, God needs the men of the church. Let the men in the Men's Organization or Bible Class face this fearful problem of the breakdown of

honor and honesty in public life by pledging themselves to practice Christian dealing in their business and in all phases of their public life. What an opportunity to witness for a God-directed life, to stand for character and righteousness down in the world of men!

### The Church Asleep

We must evangelize the church itself. Christ must begin with us and with our church. Recently, I visited four theological schools, where I spoke in chapel and interviewed students. Everywhere I heard the same disappointing word, "The church is asleep." Young ministerial students were saying to me, "I can't seem to arouse my people. The folks down at the church are not concerned." We are commissioned to invite men and women to accept Christ.

Lost in this chaos marked by the breaking up of homes, the breaking down of character, and the breaking out of the unrighteousness of our day, men and women need Christ. They cannot find Him apart from us. How are we going to win persons from a meaningless life unless our lives are truly meaningful and truly consecrated?

### Christian Dedication

Not long ago, I met a young lad from the west coast of Africa. What sheer and breath-taking dedication to the Christian cause was his! I find I am yet moved by what he said. Here was a young man, knowing nothing of World Service, of the usual routines of the Church, of its resources to finance persons for the mission field, coming to America to study, to prepare himself for evangelistic work with his people in Africa. He did this entirely on his own. He earned the money for the journey here; he earned his way while here attending the theological school; and he earned the money for his passage to return to his people once more! One could see in his face, and catch in the intonation of his voice, the fact that in a total sense his was a Christ-surrendered life. Whoever we are, and wherever we are, we ought to ask ourselves the question, "Do I know Christ in my life that way?"

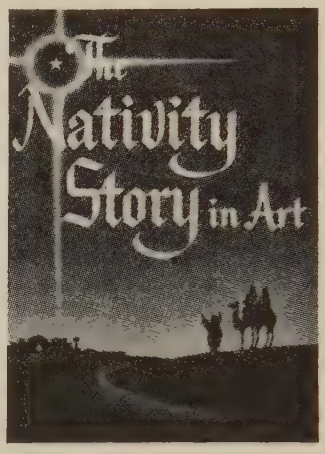
Back there in that ten-cent store on that pre-Christmas day a boy was lost. But because of a man's concern, that boy was found. Out here in all this dark and desperate present where men and women are lost, let us determine to lift up life so that they can be found of God!

(*This article is being issued in appealing format as the Good Tidings Tract of the Month for December.*)


A Colorful Portrayal

of

*The Christmas Story*

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TIDINGS
1908 Grand Ave. Nashville 4, Tenn.

# Christmas Candlelight Service

## A Suggested Service for Christmas Eve

By L. G. Wayne Furman, Superintendent
Jamestown District, Erie Conference

Prelude—"Christmas Carol Rhapsody" *Matheson*

I. "FOR BEHOLD THE DARKNESS SHALL COVER THE EARTH"
1. Comfort Ye My People ..... Handel
2. Prophecy—Isaiah 2:2-4
3. O Come, O Come, Immanuel—Hymn No. 83

II. "BUT THE LORD SHALL ARISE UPON THEE AND HIS GLORY SHALL BE SEEN UPON THEE"
1. The Annunciation—Luke 1:26-33
2. The Magnificat—Hymnal 632
3. The Lowly Birth—Luke 2:1-7

III. "I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD"
1. Silent Night
2. The Light of Men—John 1:4-9
3. The Lighting of the Candles
4. The First Noel—Hymn No. 97 (Congregation and Choir)
5. They Have Seen a Great Light—Isaiah 9:2, 6, 7

IV. "MARY AND JOSEPH"
1. Luther's Cradle Song
2. What Child Is This?—No. 109
3. There's a Song in the Air!—No. 98

V. "AND THERE WERE IN THE SAME COUNTRY SHEPHERDS"
1. The Shepherds—Luke 2:8-14
2. It Came Upon the Midnight Clear
3. Hark! the Herald Angels Sing
4. Let Us Now Go—Luke 2:15-16
5. While Shepherds Watched—Hymn No. 88 (Congregation and Choir)

VI. WISE MEN CAME FROM THE EAST
1. They See the Star—Matthew 2:1-3, 9-11
2. We Three Kings of Orient Are—Hymn No. 102
3. As Lately We Watched ..... *Scholin*

VII. LET US GO UNTO BETHLEHEM
1. Many Nations Shall Come—Micah 4:1-3
2. O Little Town of Bethlehem ..... *Reader*
3. Processional—O Come, All Ye Faithful—Hymn No. 96 (Congregation and Choir)
4. Fairest Lord Jesus
5. Gloria in Excelsis—No. 588
6. Silent Night

VIII. THEY PRESENTED UNTO HIM GIFTS
1. Period of Meditation and Prayer
2. Presentation of Gifts
3. Gloria in Excelsis ..... *Mozart*
4. Joy to the World!—Hymn No. 89 (Congregation and Choir)
5. The Heavens Are Telling ..... *Handel*
6. Benediction
7. Christmas Bells ..... *Chimes or Church Bells*

### *DETAILS OF THE SERVICE*

Candles should be placed on the altar, the window ledges, and at other suitable positions about the nave of the church. If the church has a center aisle, candlesticks can be fixed on the ends of the pews so as to light "The Way." At ten-thirty all lights may be turned on and the prelude may start at ten-forty-five. The choir should be seated in the balcony with flashlights, as all lights should be turned out when the program actually starts.

I

1. Solo.
2. Reader with strong, clear voice, from some concealed position.
3. Full choir.

II

1 and 3. Reader.
2. Soprano Solo (Hymnal).

III

1. Solo. Small child dressed in white carrying a lighted candle.
2. Reader.
3. This should be done by two boys about twelve years of age dressed in white robes. They should first light the candles on the altar, then all others with proper form and due solemnity. A violin may play "Silent Night" from some unseen position until at least half the candles are lighted.
4. Full choir.
5. The Voice.

IV

Mary and Joseph with the manger cradle may be shown here. If the Nativity scene is portrayed in tableau the actors should hold their positions until the close of the service. A spotlight should be thrown upon them.

1. Soprano solo.
2. Duet.
3. Full chorus.

V

1. Reader.
2. Ladies' Voices.
3. Full Chorus. Here Shepherds in costume may start down the aisle with solemn step and take their places to the left of the Cradle.
4. Reader.
5. Full Chorus and Congregation.

VI

1. Reader.
2. Three Wise Men in regal costume may come down the aisle singing this number; then, having knelt, each may offer his gift as he sings the appropriate verse of this song, then take positions at right of Cradle.
3. Choir.

VII

1. Reader. The Choir should come down from the balcony. Each member should light his candle from the candle of person ahead.
2. Reader.
3. Full Choir—each member carrying a lighted candle.
4. Solo or Duet. Choir should kneel at chancel.
5. Choir. Lighted candles may be placed on Communion cup racks or chancel railing.
6. Choir reverently humming as they take place in choir loft.

VIII

1. Directed by the Pastor.
2. The ushers should direct the congregation to the chancel where the people will kneel or stand in a moment of silent prayer before making their offering. The organ may play softly hymns of consecration as is done in Holy Communion. A lighted candle may be given to each worshiper as he takes his seat.
3. Choir.
4. Congregation and Choir.

# Work Camps of Evangelism

Indiana work-campers participate in a community survey.

"I don't believe there is an evangelist in the United States who could have done for our church and community what has been done this week," a leading layman told L. P. Jumper, director of the Booneville (Mississippi) Youth Work Camp of Evangelism, at the conclusion of the camp period.

Reporting on the Michigan Work Camp, Howard Lyman, its director, wrote in a recent letter, "Thirty-four of the most wonderful Christian youth I have ever known have returned to their homes in the Michigan Conference. And I am certain that even though the camp itself is a part of history, the spirit and power of love in Christ that we discovered there will never leave any of us."

Richard V. Kendall, director of the Work Camp at Pasadena, California, echoed these sentiments when he said, "With forty-three outstanding young people and a faculty of five, including George Harper, we had a most remarkable 10 days. The Holy Spirit was felt with great power among us before the camp was over."

Coming to the office of Howard Ellis, director of the Department of Cooperative Youth Evangelism, reports from all parts of the country substantiate these conclusions. Without exception they tell of our youth finding the real meaning of prayer and fellowship with Christ through sharing with others.

Perhaps one of the outstanding events of the 1952 Work Camps occurred at Moses Lake, Washington, during July. Here, a group of 14 Methodist youth of the Pacific Northwest Conference had gone to assist a minister and his wife in establishing an MYF in this fast-growing community in the Columbia Basin.

After a week of intensive effort under the direction of A. C. Wieschmeir, Conference Secretary of Evangelism, and George Harper, Projects Secretary of the National Conference of Methodist Youth, the group planned a charter MYF meeting for the first Sunday evening. Much to their disappointment, not one person came.

Undaunted, the visitors passed the hat to raise funds to make it possible for anyone who desired to do so to stay an additional week and to continue the visitation and witnessing campaign.

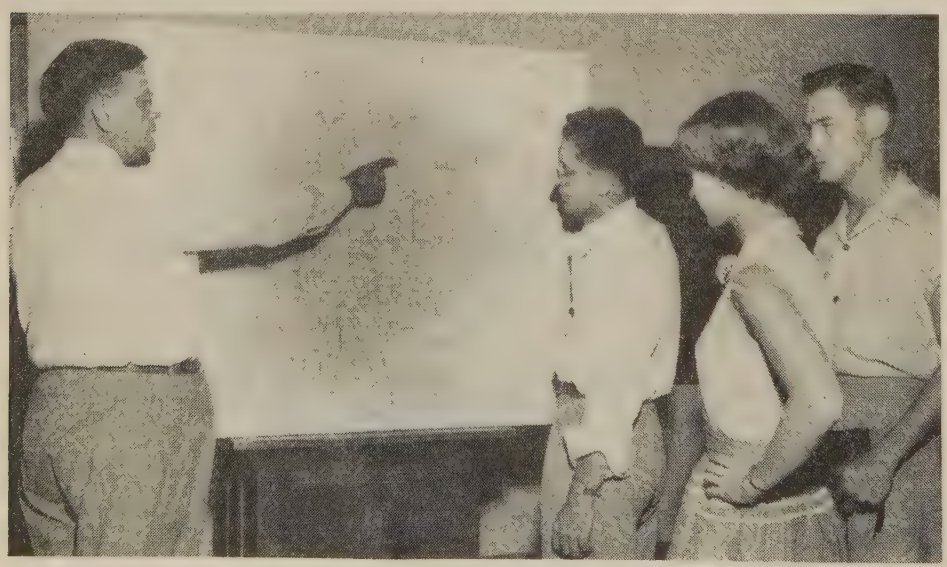
A sign was lettered with the words "You will be here someday, why not Sunday?" and hung on the door of the town mortuary, where church services were held. In addition, an intensified campaign of evangelism was conducted during the second week. It was a tremendous effort. But the results were equally tremendous, when, on the following Sunday evening, 24 young people came and an MYF was organized.

Now, even before the final reports for the 1952 season have been compiled, plans for the 1953 summer camps are going forward with renewed emphasis.

Commenting on new proposals in the field of youth work, Howard Ellis said, "The General Conference has asked that we extend and expand the work camp program into every Annual Conference as a training program for the chairman of the Christian Witness Commission in the new MYF setup.

"Second, it has been recommended that we inaugurate a project involving a 'Summer of Service' to be known as the 'SOS Movement.'

"This is an effort to combine the strategies of the Caravan and Work



L. O. Smith (left), Director of Field Work, and George Richards (right of map), Director of the Work Camp at Wichita, Kansas, and two work-campers study the areas to be surveyed in the city.

Camp programs, which have demonstrated that youth have a definite place in the work of evangelism. The purpose of this volunteer service project is to provide qualified youth with an opportunity to serve in Christian witness through action," Mr. Ellis explained. "It is recommended that the Youth Department, under the joint committee on youth evangelism, recruit, train, and assign the youth to work under the direction of qualified pastors for the summer of 1953. After a 10-day training period, teams of two or three will be assigned to an area where they will work in close cooperation with the local pastor for the remainder of the summer.

"Third," Mr. Ellis pointed out, "it is recommended that the Youth Department set up, as soon as possible, a Spiritual Life Retreat Training Conference. This conference will be composed of ministers, laymen, and some youth who have been carefully selected. To start with, it is proposed that one conference, centrally located, be held on a national level, together with four or five sectional conferences scattered throughout the United States.

"In all phases of the new program, evangelism will receive the major emphasis," Mr. Ellis declared.

Adopted as the spearhead of emphasis on evangelism in youth work, five proposals were outlined by the National Methodist Youth Planning Conference at Purdue University when youth leaders and adult workers met last August.

Harold Ewing, Director of Youth for the Board of Education, said the five objectives are:

"1. To lay hold of the transforming power of God through Bible study, commitment to Christ, and personal spiritual disciplines.

"2. To meet the world's pagan forces with Christian conviction and action.

"3. To capture young people everywhere with the message of Christ.

"4. To dedicate ourselves to the Christian task through vocation, through churchmanship, and service in the community.

"5. To work for a dynamic Christian fellowship in the local and world community."

---

### A Teen-Age Girl's Definition of the Church

"The Church is a group of people organized to make Jesus Christ better known, better loved, better understood, and better followed."

# The Meaning of Christmas

## To God The Father It Meant Giving His Son

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

## To God The Son It Meant Leaving Heaven's Glory to Become a Servant Obedient Unto Death

"Christ Jesus, who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and, being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:5-8, R.V.).

## To The World It Means That God Has Provided a Saviour

"I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10, 11).

☆ ☆ ☆

Christmas hails the birth of Him who was born to die—to die in the sinner's stead, to purchase the redemption of his soul. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid upon Him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6).

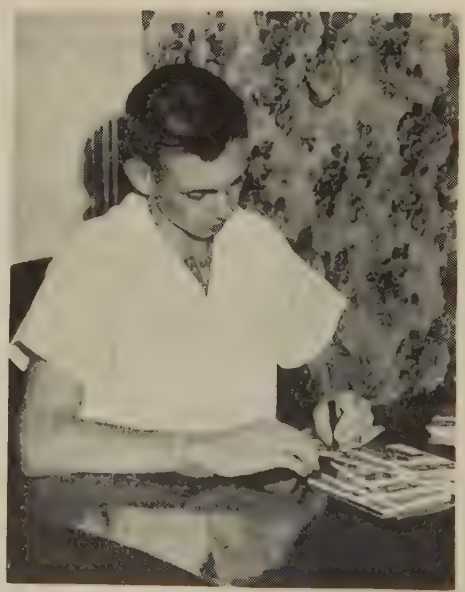
## To You It Means That God Offers Eternal Life as a Gift

"The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23). "To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name" (John 1:12).

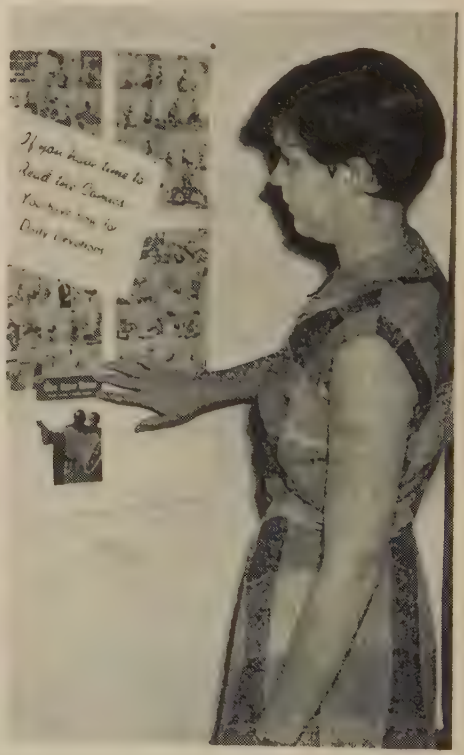
—Compiled by Willard M. Aldrich
in *Doorstep Evangel*

This family received a copy of *The Upper Room* and began their family altar the day they joined the Otis church.

At the St. Clair Sunday school the pastor calls the names and a youth helps him distribute the copies.



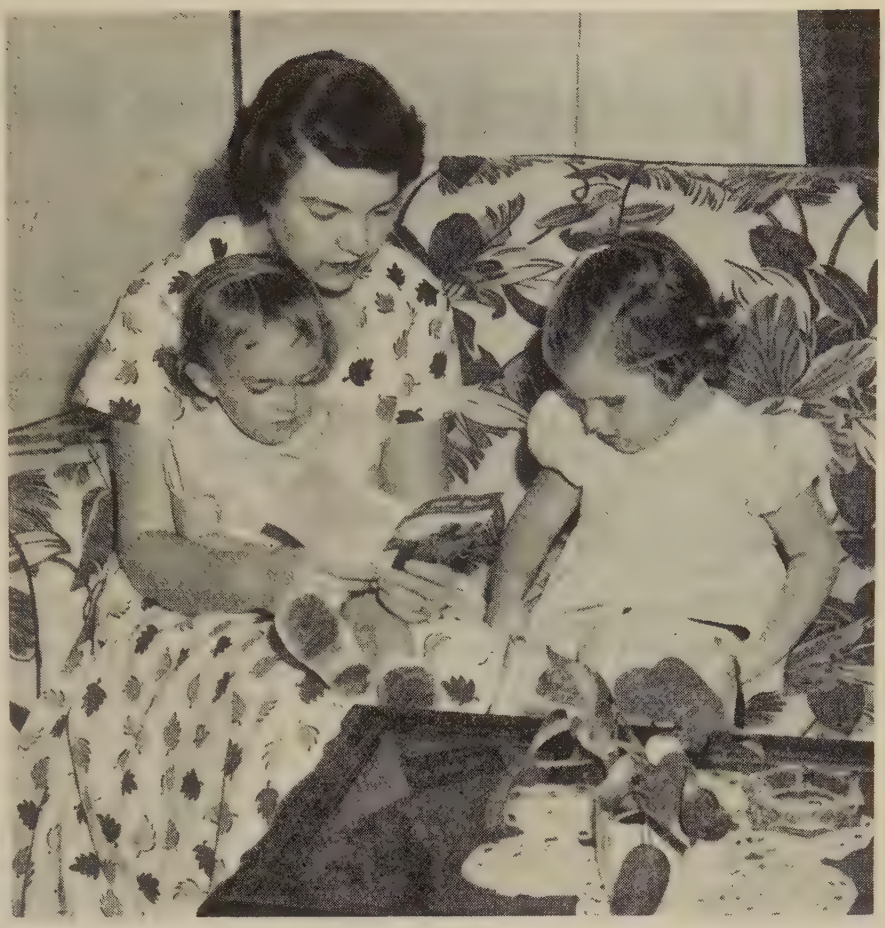
The pastor (above) writes the name of each family on copies of *The Upper Room*. They are handed out in the church services. People not present receive their copies from committees of visitors. About 200 families receive copies.

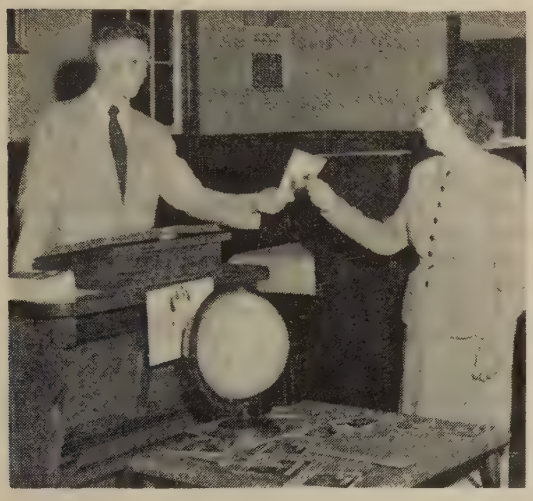


Miss Patsy Barlow places a poster in the Antioch Church.

# Student Pastor Emphasizes Family Altar On 7-Point Circuit

Donald G. White, student pastor on the Persia Circuit in the Holston Conference, has found that emphasis on daily devotions at the family altar is a source of strength in each of his seven churches. A senior at East Tennessee State College, he realized this summer that few of the people on his charge had the inspiration and strength that comes from the family altar. Pictures on these pages show some of the steps in achieving his program. He started out by ordering 200 copies of THE UPPER ROOM, enough for every family. In each church he enlisted the help of the Sunday school superintendents and the MYF; and in each church a service emphasizing the value of daily devotions was held, during which copies of THE UPPER ROOM were distributed.





Mrs. Charles Stewart, of the Pleasant Hill church, pauses for daily devotions wtih daughters Sandra and Sharan. Mr. Stewart was recalled for military service and is serving in Japan.

At the Strahl church (left) the name of each family was called and a representative of each family came forward to receive the copy.

Guy Rader (lower right), MYF sponsor of the Whiteburg church, discusses with members of the group plans to take copies of *The Upper Room* to families not at the church services.

The Hyatt sisters (lower left) have their daily devotions. Their father was the first pastor of the Whiteburg church and the building was erected during his ministry.

# The Local Church Commission on Membership and Evangelism

The Commission on Membership and Evangelism is, by far, one of the most vital units in the local church. No mere paper commission, it is literally the spark plug for the entire fellowship; and where its members seriously accept its responsibilities and opportunities, it provides the evangelistic drive so basic to the growth of a spiritually effective church.

The first duty of this commission is to reach the unreached. The injunction contained in the parable of the great supper constitutes its marching orders: "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." The eternal promises of God are its assurance of winning men through the redemptive love of Jesus Christ. In every community there are unchurched people whose spiritual problems will be solved only when they are actively related to the house of prayer. Let none perish for want of the Word!

## Must Study

To accomplish this objective, every member of the commission should familiarize himself with the total evangelistic program of the church. This means that he should study both the church and the community with a view to discovering prospective members; and, in the light of his study, he should recommend minimum evangelistic goals to be met by the congregation. He should encourage the achievement of these goals through enthusiastic planning for and zealous participation in visitation campaigns, as well as in the promotion of special seasons of evangelism; and he should undergird such efforts by helping to organize prayer groups and circles in both the homes and the church.

At all times the members of the Commission on Membership and Evangelism should be concerned with the deepening of the spiritual life of the church. Toward this end they should actively work for the organization of Fishermen's Clubs, which help to maintain the church's "spiritual glow" through their crusading spirit. Likewise, the members of this commission should promote an adequate program for assimilating new members, both by serving as Fellowship Friends and by distributing evangelistic and devotional literature designed to inspire the practice of the Holy Habits.

The Advent season should be particularly busy for the members of this commission. There is no more appropriate time to present souls to Christ than upon the celebration of Christ's nativity. A Christmas class, comprised of whole families, would make the observance of this holy period all the more meaningful.

The social life of the church is also important during the Christmas season. In fact, it may be thought of as a genuine evangelistic opportunity of which the Commission on Membership and Evangelism may make a great deal by careful planning. Bishop Raines once preached a great sermon at Hennepin Avenue Church in which he called upon his people to give their finest parties during that season, without a drop of liquor being served, as a demonstration to the city of Minneapolis that Christians could enjoy social experiences without liquor. So, in the church, the various classes and organized groups may be requested to have Christmas parties at which the finest fellowship may be enjoyed on a completely Christian basis.

## Wonderful Opportunity

Many churches will find that a general parish dinner or social evening, attended by the entire membership, sometime during the Christmas week, is a wonderful opportunity to develop a sense of Christian solidarity.

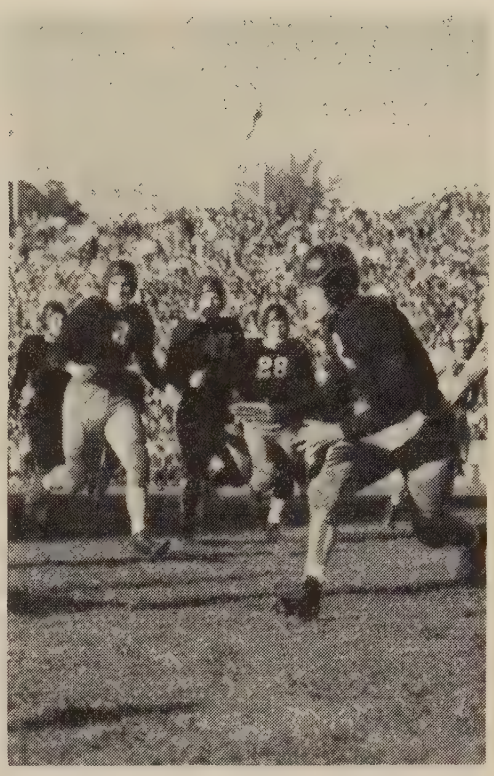
The members of the Commission on Membership and Evangelism may well initiate such plans as these and so strengthen the total program of the local church.

To help this commission, *Shepherds* magazine will carry both practical and inspirational materials prepared by individuals who are drawing upon rich personal experiences in the great work of evangelism. Every member of this commission should receive *Shepherds*. Individual subscriptions are available at $1.50 per year; 10 or more subscriptions from one church at the same time cost only $1.00 each. Send your subscriptions to TIDINGS, 1908 Grand Ave., Nashville 4, Tenn.

Below (left), a pastor meets with his Commission on Membership and Evangelism to plan a long-range program of evangelism. At right, a pastor visits with laymen in their home.

# "Block that Kick!"

## The "Discipline" Urges Caution In Dropping Members From the Church Records



**G. Ernest Thomas**
**Director**
**Department of Spiritual Life**

"Block that kick!" is a cry which resounds over athletic stadiums during this season of the year. It reflects tense moments which may decide the final result in many a football game.

Members of the Council of Bishops, and hundreds of other leaders in The Methodist Church, are convinced that the present hour is a crucial one for the Church with regard to its membership rolls. "Block the temptation to drop people carelessly and hurriedly from the roll of the Church!" is their plea. It is easier to take a person from the membership rolls than it is to secure and train a new convert. Any precipitate action in dropping a Christian from the Fellowship may have its effect throughout eternity. Eternal destinies are at stake when we write people in and out of the church records.

### General Conference Acts

The General Conference of 1952 removed the designation of "Inactive Members" from the listings of membership. There was just cause for such an action. The vast confusion which prevailed throughout Methodism in defining an "inactive member" caused wide differences in the number of members so listed in churches of similar size. Recognizing such a difficulty, the General Conference made all members "Active" in the records. There is now only one way to list those who are a part of the Church Fellowship, whether they have previously been on the "Active" or the "Inactive" Roll. They are Active Members.

The General Conference carefully described the way by which a member can be removed from the church membership. Let us examine the legislation (the italics are ours):

"If a member in a local church is for a PERIOD OF TWO YEARS persistently negligent of his vows or without good and sufficient reason continuously *absents himself for such a period from the worship of the church,* or has persistently *refused* for such a period without just reason *to support the church,* or if his *address has been unknown* to the members of the congregation for two years, his name may be removed from the church membership roll *by vote of the quarterly conference* on recommendation of the pastor and of the Commission on Membership and Evangelism. Before such action is taken, *the pastor or the commission shall visit or otherwise communicate* with such person, if his address is known, and entreat him to become a faithful member. If he refuses to give heed to such entreaty, the Quarterly Conference may proceed as above indicated, and order to be entered on membership roll after his name, the following: "Removed by order of the Quarterly Conference." The membership of such person is thereby terminated, and the *Record thereof shall be retained. . . .*" (*Discipline* ¶ 125)

Note that the pastor is not given the right to remove members from the records. Nor is that power given to the Commission on Membership and Evangelism, or to any other committee. Only the action of the Quarterly Conference can remove any person from the records of the church, and the Quarterly Conference can do it only according to the provisions of the *Discipline.*

The General Conference makes the period of trial two years. It defines the reasons for separation of members from the fellowship as "absence from the worship of the church," or "refusal to support the church." But the *Discipline* specifically requires that personal visitation be carried on before a final decision is made with regard to a person's membership.

### Reduction of Losses

The General Conference, the Council of Bishops, and representative leaders throughout the Church have joined in an urgent plea to "Block that kick!" "Don't terminate membership in the Church for any reason less than those stated in the *Discipline,*" they are saying.

The losses will be less if the provisions of the *Discipline* are followed with respect to this problem. And—what is of greater significance—pastors and Commissions on Membership and Evangelism will discover that indifferent members can be won back when some person shows an interest in them and in their spiritual life.

# NONRESIDENT MEMBERS AND LETTERS OF NOTIFICATION

The recent General Conference enacted a large amount of significant legislation. It is hoped that the importance of that action relating to inactive and nonresident members will not be overlooked or neglected.

It is well for us to have in mind that when a person becomes a member of The Methodist Church, he is not simply a member of a local group of persons, but rather is a member of a larger body of Christians—The Methodist Church—and holds universal fellowship in the Church of our Christ.

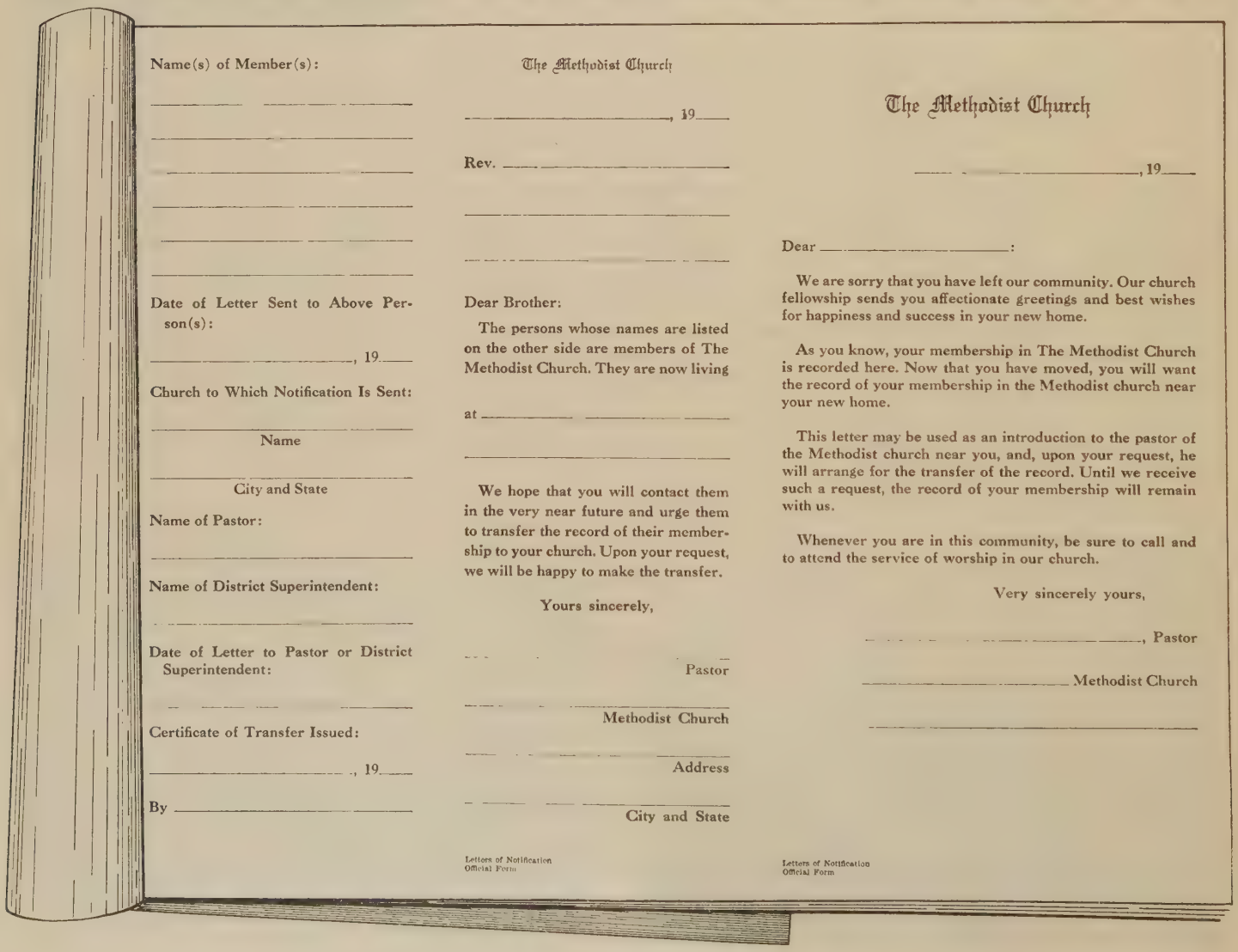
Unless particular care is exercised in our attempt to reclassify those who have been on the inactive list, we are apt to lose a great many persons for whose pastoral care we are responsible. If the action of the General Conference is followed *promptly* by the pastor when a member moves to another community, there will be far less likelihood of losing the person, or of that person's interest waning in the Church and the Kingdom of Christ.

Let every Methodist know that if he moves to another community, his pastor and church are desirous of helping him to put his membership in a church that is located within a radius convenient to his new place of residence. Certainly, absentee membership is not good for the individual or the church. To fellowship actively in, and participate with, the whole Church is far more important than to retain membership in a particular congregation located where one no longer resides.

New forms of the "letter of notification" have been provided by, and are available from, The Methodist Publishing House.

If a minister has been unable to determine who is the pastor or District Superintendent in the community to which a member of his church has moved, he should send the letter of notification to Dr. Joseph H. Edge, General Board of Evangelism, 1908 Grand Avenue, Nashville 4, Tennessee. It will be forwarded to the pastor or District Superintendent of the community to which the nonresident member has moved. May we urge that you order, *at once,* the official form of "letters of notification" from The Methodist Publishing House?

Shown here is a miniature reproduction of the 1952-1956 edition of *Letters of Notification.* Containing 31 perforated letters, the book sells at 75c.



Name(s) of Member(s):

Date of Letter Sent to Above Person(s):

_____, 19____

Church to Which Notification Is Sent:

Name

City and State

Name of Pastor:

Name of District Superintendent:

Date of Letter to Pastor or District Superintendent:

Certificate of Transfer Issued:

_____, 19____

By _____

The Methodist Church

_____, 19____

Rev. _____

Dear Brother:

The persons whose names are listed on the other side are members of The Methodist Church. They are now living

at _____

We hope that you will contact them in the very near future and urge them to transfer the record of their membership to your church. Upon your request, we will be happy to make the transfer.

Yours sincerely,

Pastor

Methodist Church

Address

City and State

Letters of Notification
Official Form

The Methodist Church

_____, 19____

Dear _____:

We are sorry that you have left our community. Our church fellowship sends you affectionate greetings and best wishes for happiness and success in your new home.

As you know, your membership in The Methodist Church is recorded here. Now that you have moved, you will want the record of your membership in the Methodist church near your new home.

This letter may be used as an introduction to the pastor of the Methodist church near you, and, upon your request, he will arrange for the transfer of the record. Until we receive such a request, the record of your membership will remain with us.

Whenever you are in this community, be sure to call and to attend the service of worship in our church.

Very sincerely yours,

_____, Pastor

_____ Methodist Church

_____

Letters of Notification
Official Form

Evangelism in Action

SUPPLEMENT TO SHEPHERDS

DECEMBER, 1952

## Methodist Laymen Hold Spiritual Life Retreat

The first National Methodist Laymen's Spiritual Life Retreat, held in Buffalo, New York, Sept. 26-27-28, established a pattern to be put into effect on a nationwide basis, those in attendance declared.

In a concluding session a resolution was passed requesting that the General Board of Evangelism and the General Board of Lay Activities study the possibility of having such a retreat annually.

Commenting on the three-day meeting in which 100 laymen from 20 states participated, G. Ernest Thomas, Director of the Department of Spiritual Life, said: "The Retreat brought a vital and creative spiritual experience to Methodist laymen and set the pattern for a new approach to laymen's retreats. The men who attended learned by listening to messages of inspiration, by numerous fellowships in prayer, and by public witnessing on the street, in homes, on the radio, and in church services."

### Prayer Fellowships

Speaking of the prayer fellowships and other experiences, one man stated: "I have spent more time on my knees in prayer during these days in Buffalo than in any similar period in my life."

Another commented: "We prayed and we witnessed, and as a result I feel closer to God than at any other time in my Christian experience."

A man from New Jersey said: "I have been a lay leader for two years. Being a young man, I have felt inadequate for the task. Here in Buffalo I have found the answer to my needs. I have found a fuller Christian experience than I have ever known before, and a power which will help me to do important work in my church."

Speakers on the program included Robert G. Mayfield, Executive Secretary, General Board of Lay Activities; Herbert Touchstone, Chicago; Howard Ellis, Eugene Golay, and G. Ernest Thomas, of the staff of the General Board of Evangelism; Bishop Matthew W. Clair, and Harry Denman, Executive Secretary of the General Board of Evangelism.

The Genesee Conference, under the leadership of Thomas B. Clay, lay leader, was host for the retreat.

## Start New Group

A chapter of Methodist Men was organized in Oakland Filipino Community Church following the integration of the California Oriental Conference with the California-Nevada Conference.

Layman Will P. Ralph was speaker at the installation meeting, August 3. His subject was "The Power to See It Through."

Officers chosen for the newly formed group were Juan A. Lorenzo, president; Esteban Layton, vice-president; Pete San Juan, secretary. A. C. Lopez is the lay leader of the church.

## Over 25,000 Choose No Church

More than half the people showed no preference for any religion in a census of 50,000 persons living in the Montebello, Bella Vista, Monterey Park area and the western section of South San Gabriel, a recent census shows. The census was directed through the Southern California Council of Churches by Gerald Harvey, of Methodist headquarters.

## Start Two Churches

The Sundance-Upton two-point charge in the state of Wyoming is building two new churches at once. Each church is nearly three-fourths completed and competition runs high to be the first church finished. The structures in each case will cost about $35,000.

Participants in the National Methodist Laymen's Spiritual Life Retreat conduct a street meeting in Buffalo, New York.

# Methodist Boards and Agencies Organize for Quadrennium

First Methodist Agency to organize for the new quadrennium was the General Board of Evangelism, which re-elected Harry Denman as Executive Secretary, created two new departments, and named other officers and staff members at a meeting in Chicago last August. (See story in October *Shepherds.*) In September the various other Boards and Agencies established their policies and personnel for the coming four-year period.

### Missions

Meeting September 3-6 at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina, the Board of Missions named Eugene L. Smith as General Executive Secretary. Dr. Smith's title heretofore had been simply that of Executive Secretary. James K. Matthews was designated Executive Secretary with responsibility for work in India and Pakistan. Frank T. Cartwright, Ralph E. Dodge, T. T. Brumbaugh, and James E. Ellis became Administrative Secretaries. Ernest E. Tuck was elected director of the Advance program for foreign missions. Roy S. Smyers is Advance Secretary. Re-elected President of the Board was Bishop Arthur J. Moore, who has served as Methodism's missionary leader since Unification.

### World Peace

On September 8 in Chicago, the Board of World Peace re-elected Ralph W. Sockman, pastor, Christ Methodist Church, New York, as President. Charles F. Boss, Jr., was renamed Executive Secretary. Consideration was given to a national conference of peace leaders from the Annual Conferences in 1952, a national convocation on peace, and the Crusade for a New World Order.

### Hospitals and Homes

With the re-election of Bishop William T. Watkins as President and Karl P. Meister as Executive Secretary, the Board of Hospitals and Homes completed its organization, September 8-9. Bishop Lloyd C. Wicke was named one of the Vice-Presidents.

### Publication

At its meeting, September 9-10, in Chicago, the Board of Publication elected J. Edgar Washabaugh, of Morristown, New Jersey, as publishing agent to succeed Roy L. Smith, who retired. Lovick Pierce, of Nashville, Tennessee, was re-elected as the Church's other publishing agent. A layman, he has served since 1946. Re-elected to editorial posts were Dr. T. Otto Nall, of Chicago, as editor of *The Christian Advocate;* Prince A. Taylor, of New Orleans, as editor of *The Central Christian Advocate;* and Nolan B. Harmon, of New York, as book editor.

Judge William H. Swiggart of Nashville was re-elected Board chairman. He has held the post since 1940. The Board now has two Bishops as members—Gerald Kennedy and Marshall R. Reed.

The retiring agent, Dr. Smith, was honored by the Board at a testimonial dinner, along with Dr. C. A. Bowen, editor of church school publications, who also retired.

### Coordinating Council

Bishop Charles W. Brashares of Chicago heads up the new Coordinating Council. He was elected at the organizational meeting of the 34-member group on September 9.

### Education

Also meeting on September 9, the Board of Education re-elected Bishop Fred P. Corson as President. Three other Bishops were chosen as Vice-Presidents and Divisional Chairmen. These are Bishop Paul E. Martin, Division of the Local Church; Bishop Paul N. Garber, Division of Educational Institutions; and Bishop Lloyd C. Wicke, Editorial Division. Dr. John Q. Schisler was re-elected Executive Secretary of the Local Church Division, while John O. Gross was renamed Executive Secretary of the Division of Educational Institutions.

### Lay Activities

The Board of Lay Activities re-elected Ray H. Nichols, of Vernon, Texas, as President. Other officers chosen were Fran H. Faber, Minneapolis, Minnesota, Vice President; and Carl W. Haggard, Lexington, Kentucky, as recording secretary. Robert G. Mayfield was renamed Executive Secretary. Serving on the executive committee is Bishop Glenn R. Phillips, of Denver, Colorado.

### Temperance

Again heading the Board of Temperance is Bishop Paul E. Martin, who was elected President at the organizational meeting on September 9. Caradine R. Hooton, of Washington, D. C., was re-elected Executive Secretary. Bishop Edgar A. Love, of Baltimore, is Vice-President. He will represent temperance interests on the new Commission on Promotion and Cultivation.

### Chaplains

Elected chairman of the Commission on Chaplains was Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam. Bishops A. Frank Smith and Paul N. Garber were named vice chairmen. D. Stewart Patterson, Executive Secretary, and his two associates, Fred H. Heather and Fred C. Reynolds—both former chaplains—were re-elected. An advisory member from each department of the armed forces and other fields of service was also elected.

### Social and Economic Relations

In a brief organizational meeting on September 9, the new Board of Social and Economic Relations elected Bishop Wicke as chairman. After naming other officers, the Board deferred selection of staff and headquarters until later meetings.

### Methodist Information

Methodist Information retains the same President and staff as a result of the organizational meeting held in Chicago on September 9. Bishop Richard C. Raines is chairman. Ralph Stoody was renamed Executive Secretary, with headquarters in New York. Arthur West remains as Associate Secretary and manager of the Chicago office, while O. B. Fanning continues as Associate Secretary and manager of the Nashville office. Approved was a $4,000 grant-in-aid program to establish a Washington, D. C., information office.

### Secretaries

When the enlarged Council of Secretaries met on September 11, Charles F. Boss Jr., was named its President. Vice-Presidents are D. Stewart Patterson and Miss Henrietta Gibson.

### Radio and Film

The Radio and Film Commission will locate its new headquarters in Nashville, with Bishop Donald H. Tippett as President and Bishop Marvin A. Franklin as Vice-President. Harry C. Spencer was re-elected Executive Secretary. Howard Tower, of Nashville, is Associate Secretary and Program Director.

### Promotion and Cultivation

National headquarters of the new Commission on Promotion and Cultivation of The Methodist Church will be located at 740 Rush Street, Chicago, with E. Harold Mohn as Executive Director. Bishop William C. Martin, Dallas, Texas, was named Chairman. Bishop Costen J. Harrell, Charlotte, North Carolina, is Vice Chairman. Thomas B. Lugg, of Chicago, was elected treasurer. Dr. Mohn was also designated as Secretary of the Commission.

Following the meeting, Dr. Mohn announced as temporary staff members, pending confirmation at the November session, O. L. Simpson as editor of promotional publications and Earle H. MacLeod as manager of promotional publications.

### Overseas Relief

Gaither P. Warfield, of New York City, succeeds Bishop Titus Lowe in administering the Methodist Committee for Overseas Relief. Chairman of the Committee is Bishop Frederick B. Newell.

### Pensions

At its meeting in Chicago, September 11-12, the Board of Pensions named Charles L. Calkins as successor to Thomas A. Stafford in the position of Executive Secretary of the Illinois Corporation. A. Thomas McIlwain, of St. Louis, was re-elected Executive Secretary of the Missouri Corporation. Bishop Ivan Lee Holt was re-elected President.

### World Service and Finance

The Council on World Service and Finance has re-elected Bishop Clare Purcell as chairman and Thomas B. Lugg as Executive Secretary and Treasurer. A new division of special services was set up to include the purchasing bureau and the present transportation bureau.

### Advance

Created by the General Conference to carry on the churchwide program of special gifts and service, the Advance Committee met September 11 for purposes of organization. Bishop Costen J. Harrell was named chairman. The Committee will not have a paid staff. It will serve in an advisory capacity to the new Commission on Promotion and Cultivation.

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## Bishops Issue Call to Prayer

Methodist Bishops of nine southeastern states have issued a "Call to Prayer" in preparation for the denomination's United Evangelistic Mission throughout the South next spring.

Written by Bishop Costen J. Harrell, Charlotte, N. C., and signed by the 11 other members of the College of Bishops, Southeastern Jurisdiction, the special prayer was to be read on World Wide Communion Sunday in 12,173 Methodist churches.

The Jurisdiction embraces Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia, and North and South Carolina.

In addition to Bishop Harrell, the episcopal message was signed by the following Area Bishops: Arthur J. Moore, Atlanta; Clare Purcell, Birmingham; Marvin A. Franklin, Jackson, Miss.; Roy H. Short, Nashville, Tenn.; William T. Watkins, Louisville, Ky.; Paul N. Garber, Richmond, Va.; John Branscomb, Jacksonville, Fla.; and four retired Bishops—Paul B. Kern, Lake Junaluska, N. C.; Hoyt M. Dobbs, Shreveport, La.; U. V. W. Darlington, Huntington, W. Va., and W. W. Peele, Laurinburg, N. C.

A goal of 200,000 new members has been set by Methodist leaders for the Southwide evangelistic campaign to be conducted in two main phases, April 17-26 and May 15-24.

Bishop Short has been named general chairman of the simultaneous mission. Central headquarters will be set up in Atlanta, Ga. The campaign director is Harry Williams, Associate Secretary, the General Board of Evangelism.

"You Need Christ Now" has been adopted by the 33-member planning committee as the campaign slogan. The "Call to Prayer" initiated six months of intensive preparation, including the organization of Area and District committees and training schools for 120,000 laymen who will engage in visitation.

## Prayer Box

Being burdened with a desire to help others to realize the value of faith and of prayer, Mrs. Mayme Kirby, a member of the First Methodist Church, Bessemer, Alabama, has started a "Crusade of Prayer," by which she mails out prayer cards with the request that five things be prayed for each morning before breakfast, together with other things that the individual may have on his own mind. For further information about this "Crusade of Prayer," write "Prayer Box," Box 3723 W. E., Birmingham, Alabama.

## Evangelist Changes Address

S. M. Butts, formerly of Charleston, Mississippi, may now be contacted at 4649 Churchill Drive, Jackson, Mississippi. Conference Evangelist of the North Mississippi Conference, Mr. Butts has held nine meetings during the summer and fall.

## Smiling Christ

**Religious Art Company,** 855 Miller Avenue, Columbus 6, Ohio, announces that the cost of the "Smiling Christ" picture used on the June, 1952, cover of *Shepherds* has been reduced. It is available to churches, church schools, worthy charitable organizations, and youth groups for resale at the price of $1.00, with the organization keeping 50%. The picture is most popular.

## Small Church Makes Improvements

For over a year Eureka Church on the Waukau circuit has been busy, first transforming the interior into a place of beauty, and now painting the exterior.

Loyal people, an enthusiastic young minister, guidance of a District Superintendent, stimulating help from the Conference board of missions—all, and more, have gone into this achievement.

The Wisconsin Conference Commission on Town and Country Work is in the process of recognizing small churches of less than 100 members for beauty, for improvements, and for a good program. It recognizes Eureka, served by Arthur North, who also serves Waukau and North Rushford.

This church has a membership of an even 50, with a church-school enrollment of 38, an average attendance in church school of 20.

While it was paying for property improvements, Eureka church overpaid its World Service apportionment, and gave to the Advance, Rally day, and the Methodist youth fund.

## Three New Members Join General Board Staff

Each of two departments of the General Board of Evangelism has recently added a new member to its staff. Coming to assist J. W. Golden in the Department of Negro Work is W. D. Lester, of Kansas City, Kansas. Educated at Philander Smith College in Little Rock, Arkansas, and Gammon Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia, Dr. Lester has served as Executive Secretary of Christian Education of the Central West Conference, where he holds his membership. In addition to his pastorates, Dr. Lester has held the office of District Superintendent. Dr. Lester is married and has two sons.

### To Work With U.E.M.

Serving as a staff member in the Department of United Evangelistic Missions and Methods is J. Lester McGee, who comes to the Board from the pastorate at First Methodist Church, Winchester, Kentucky. Mr. McGee was a member of the Louisville Conference Board of Evangelism for seven years, serving as Conference Secretary of Evangelism for four years and as Chairman of the Conference Board for three years. A graduate of Western Kentucky State, at Bowling Green, Kentucky, and of Emory University, Georgia, Mr. McGee has held charges in both the Louisville and Kentucky Annual Conferences. While pastor at Beechmont of Louisville, Mr. McGee built a $250,000 church and added 550 new members in three years. He was one of the 54 persons who took part in the first Cuban Mission, held in 1951. Mr. McGee is married to the former Miss Anna Richardson of Glasgow, Kentucky. The couple has a 10-month-old son.

### Directs Research

Joining the staff of the General Board as Director of Research is Harold Rogers, of Anoka, Minnesota. After being graduated from the State Teachers College at St. Cloud, Mr. Rogers took additional work at the University of Minnesota, following which he taught shop and mathematics in the junior high school at Deadwood, South Dakota. During World War II he was a civilian instructor with the Army Air Force Technical Training Command. He later served as city editor on the *Daily Dispatch* at Brainerd, Minnesota, and as associate editor of *Sports Afield*. Mr. Rogers has published both factual articles and fiction in such magazines as *Collier's, Coronet,* and the *Toronto Star Weekly*. Prior to his joining the staff of the General Board, Mr. Rogers was Administrative Assistant to the Governor of Minnesota. He is married and has two sons.

## A Family of Preachers Serves Methodism

W. L. Brackman, pastor of St. Luke Methodist Church, Augusta, Georgia, has four sons, a brother, and a brother-in-law active in the ministry. William Lee Brackman, Jr., a graduate of Asbury College, is serving the Norwood charge on the Augusta District of the North Georgia Conference. John Morris Brackman, also an Asbury graduate, is pastor of the Gracewood charge on the same District. The other two sons, Emory Rogers and Julian Hearn, are still in school but are serving student appointments.

### Answer Call to Ministry

Mr. Brackman's brother, M. M. Brackman, is a member of the Florida Conference, while his brother-in-law serves a charge in the North Georgia Conference.

In the past three years at St. Luke Church Mr. Brackman has had seven young men answer the call to the ministry. During this same period, five girls have made definite decisions for Christian work. There are 12 local preachers in the church.

W. L. Brackman, pastor, St. Luke Methodist Church, Augusta, Georgia, is shown above with his four minister-sons, William, John, Emory, and Julian. Mr. Brackman (center) has been instrumental in calling seven other young men into the ministry during the past three years.

*The Call of Oxford for a*

# World Wide Mission of Evangelism

By Colin Roberts, President, Methodist Church of England

(An abstract from an address to the Methodist Conference in England)

Seventy-five years ago, in the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States, it was proposed that the Methodists of the world should meet together from time to time. Among the reasons prompting that proposal was the desire "to increase the moral and evangelistic power of common Methodism and to secure a more speedy conversion of the world." The first such Conference met in Wesley's Chapel in 1881; the last, in Oxford in 1951. Those familiar with the history of the intervening years are convinced beyond doubt that the initial call was of God. A similar certainty marked Oxford. We are a committed people, and we believe that the call is of God.

## Challenge of Evangelism

To what are we committed in the World Wide Mission of Evangelism? We are *not* committed to a campaign of a particular kind, prompted and promoted by a committee. So to interpret the deep concern of Oxford would indeed be an anticlimax. Moreover, Methodism claims to be a branch of the Holy Catholic Church, and no Church can fulfill its many-sided ministry by a series of extraordinary campaigns labeled to meet the need of the moment.

On the other hand, no Church can truly serve its age unless, by the quality of its worship, the reality of its fellowship, and the compelling witness of its life, it is engaged in a ceaseless campaign for Christ in this world of needy men. It is to this that we are committed.

Oxford appealed to Methodism to be Methodism—the kind of Methodism that God can use, freed from the timidities of self-preservation, aflame with evangelical passion and power, true to those emphases most precious in our heritage.

Are we, in thought, intention, and desire, ready for such a venture? To enter upon that venture, we must meet three essential needs. First of all, we need a recovered sense of our historic task.

What is this Methodism, touching 30,000,000 people in all parts of the world? For what purpose does it exist today?

Historically, we are a people with a message to proclaim and a mission to fulfill. The message is gathered up in our doctrines—salvation by faith, the witness of the Spirit, scriptural holiness, among others. And the mission? That is stated in the familiar lines of Charles Wesley:

> Freely to all ourselves we give
> Constrained by Jesu's love to live,
> The servants of mankind.

The labors of the crowded years are full of that giving. Wesley and his veterans—Alexander Mather, John Nelson, and a host of others—all "constrained by Jesu's love to live, the servants of mankind."

See them at it. They didn't talk *about* people; they talked *to* people. Nothing was allowed to hinder that, least of all the spirit of the age. Many of them were pelted, beaten, stamped on, thrown into ponds, drenched with water from fire hoses, tarred and feathered. But it made no difference. They did not wait until men were more disposed to receive the Word which they were called to preach. They took pleasure in weaknesses, in injuries, in distresses, in persecutions for Christ's sake, and were grateful for the privilege of being His ambassadors.

The Methodist pioneers had a message to proclaim. It was not new. They never claimed that it was new. The message of eighteenth-century Methodism was the message of first-century Christianity—Scriptural Christianity, Wesley called it. They not only asserted that men could be saved by faith in Christ, but also that they could be joyously aware of it. Furthermore, they declared that, by continual submission to the Holy Spirit, men could press on to full salvation. It was their experience, and they had to express it. The message inspired the mission; the experience made the evangelist.

The organization and constitution of The Methodist Church, with all its means of grace, came into being within 10 years to conserve the results of the message and the mission. It is ours today for that same purpose.

## A Puzzling Problem

In words familiar to us all, we are facing a growing majority who have not ceased to go to church, but who have

Evangelism Committee in session at the Ecumenical Methodist Conference, Oxford, England, August 27-September 7. W. E. Sangster, minister of Central Hall, Westminster, London, served as chairman.

never been there. They have not lost the desire for religion; they have never had it. They have not rejected religion, for they have not at any time really come face to face with it. Thus, they are ignorant of what the Christian faith really teaches and of what the Christian life really is. What of these millions, about whom we talk so much? They should be on our heart and in our thought. For them we exist, and their need (as ours) is for the gospel. Let us not underestimate the hunger in the heart of man, or his capacity to receive and respond to the message when it is offered in the power of the Holy Spirit.

"It is not easy," said Paul Sabatier, "to realize how many waiting souls there are in the world"—souls waiting to be won. Whenever we address men in the name and spirit of our Lord, the unseen allies of God are in the hearts of those to whom we speak. Let us believe that this hour of darkness and disillusionment can be the hour of dawn and deliverance, and that He who saved us can save others.

### Struggle for Man's Soul

The second need is a readiness to be prepared for our historic task.

Most of us will concede that in a day when the Church Universal is engaged in perhaps the greatest struggle ever waged for the soul of man, our readiness is not commensurate with the vast resources we have inherited. To consider the call of Oxford divorced from that somber background of human need is to rob it of solemnity and significance.

What is it we are asked to do in 1952, this year of preparation? We are asked to make it a year during which the Methodist people in every land shall "be called upon to receive for themselves the fullness of the gospel, and to offer it to others." What does this mean?

Let one who was a prophet among us answer the question I have posed. "There is but one answer," said Henry Carter, "which is in itself the specific contribution of Methodism to our sin-haunted generation and to the Church Universal. The answer is spiritual renewal, not a transient emotionalism, but the divine redirection of life in all its relationships. Nothing less than 'the entire work of God,' as Wesley proclaimed it, is involved; repentance that does not shrink from the bitterness of self-revelation, but leads by God's grace to fruits meet for repentance; faith that looks to Christ alone for salvation; holiness, whose meaning and source and vigor are centered in Christ and manifest in motive and action. It is renewal in person, of one's own self; it is renewal of fellowship within the worshipping community of which one is a member; it is a renewal of testimony to the universality of the redeeming grace of God in Christ; it is a renewal of life as 'the servant of mankind.' "

Such a renewal would mean a new attendance upon the means of grace, a new delight in worship and the Word, a new communion with God in prayer and with man in fellowship, resulting in a new quality of life.

### Concern for Social Welfare

A vital concern for man's spiritual welfare does not mean lack of concern for his material well-being. It has been well said that "any present-day theology which has not a revolutionary sociology as part of its implicit logic is not truly Christian." Until the gulf between worship and work, religion and life, Church and community can be bridged, our evangelistic efforts will appear irrelevant to many whom we seek to win.

Some in all the Churches, our own included, may question this evangelistic emphasis. They do not challenge the need for evangelism, but the methods. The thought of groups trained for an offensive, however wisely and skillfully conducted, is unacceptable to them. They believe that such methods will alienate, rather than attract, those whom they seek to win. They affirm that what a Church does is less important than what a Church is, and that the cause of Christ can best be served by creating within the Church a quality of life which shall be its own evangelistic witness in the world. At a time when our greatest need is more and better Christians it would be a distinct disservice to minimize the evangelistic witness of a Church truly Christian in spirit. Such Churches are the first to undertake new ventures to win others.

This fear of methods, however, can be exaggerated and has very little to commend it. In a day when John Smith feels that he is "a mere pawn in a political game or a spare part in an economic machine," and is pathetically ignorant of what the Christian faith really teaches and of what the Christian life really is, it will not alienate him for us to seek him out with the assurance that to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ he was worth the cross.

So, then, our historic task retains its primacy. Nothing lessens its urgency, or the importance of our preparation for it.

If that is the desire of our heart, then we shall be ready for the task at our door. "To make a thing real," said G. K. Chesterton, "you must make it local." That is our historic task related to this hour. We are called "His love to tell, His praise to show" in our Church, in our neighborhood, to those in the Church but not of it, to those on the threshold but not in it, and to those outside, indifferent to it. We are called to preparation and action, to do a definite thing in a decisive way in a given year, knowing all the time that God is not committed to our calendar. If we can do it with others, so much the better; it is the task of all the Churches, and concerted action is itself a great Christian witness.

### Reliance Upon the Holy Spirit

We need a recovered sense of our historic task. We need a readiness to be prepared for it. But we also need one thing more: a complete reliance upon God the Holy Spirit.

It was no accident that linked the Oxford call with Wesley Day, both in the year of preparation and in the year of action, or that in 1953 Wesley Day (Aldersgate anniversary) and Whitsunday fall on the same date. Recall what happened in that golden hour of history. A good man, greatly gifted, utterly sincere, passionately eager to be of service, yet pathetically ineffective, forsook himself and completely trusted God. Before May 24, 1738, John Wesley talked to men about Jesus Christ; after May 24, 1738, Jesus Christ talked to men through John Wesley—a mighty difference! His life was placed at the disposal of the Holy Spirit, to be guided by the Spirit, empowered by the Spirit, and used to do the Spirit's saving work.

In nothing was eighteenth-century Methodism more akin to first-century Christianity than in this divine enabling. Can it be that we have forgotten the ministry of the Holy Spirit? If so, we still need to tarry. We are not called to match our human frailty against the

forces of evil in our world, or to contend in our own strength against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in high places. Our resources are supernatural. Our hope is in God, without whom all our plans and programs, all gifts and graces are worth nothing.

Today Methodism can be found in 80 countries, under 40 self-governing Conferences touching 30 million people. In that great world wide fellowship we have our part and place. In every Conference this call will be heard, and to it an answer must be given.

In recent weeks it has been a moving experience to receive letters from Methodism overseas. There is no doubt about their answer. Let me sum it up in two sentences: "We are praying, preparing, and planning. We want to be in this." Do you?

Let us, then, remember what John Wesley wrote to Alexander Mather in 1777: "Give me a hundred men who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God, and I care not a straw whether they be clergymen or laymen, such alone will shake the gates of hell and bring in the Kingdom of God."


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A new sound filmstrip showing laymen how to prepare for effective visitation evangelism

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# The Metropolitan Washington, D. C., through December 5,

## HOLY

*Regular Church Attendance*

*Prayer*

*Family Devotions*

Conference and District Secretaries of Evangelism throughout the nation will participate in this Mission.

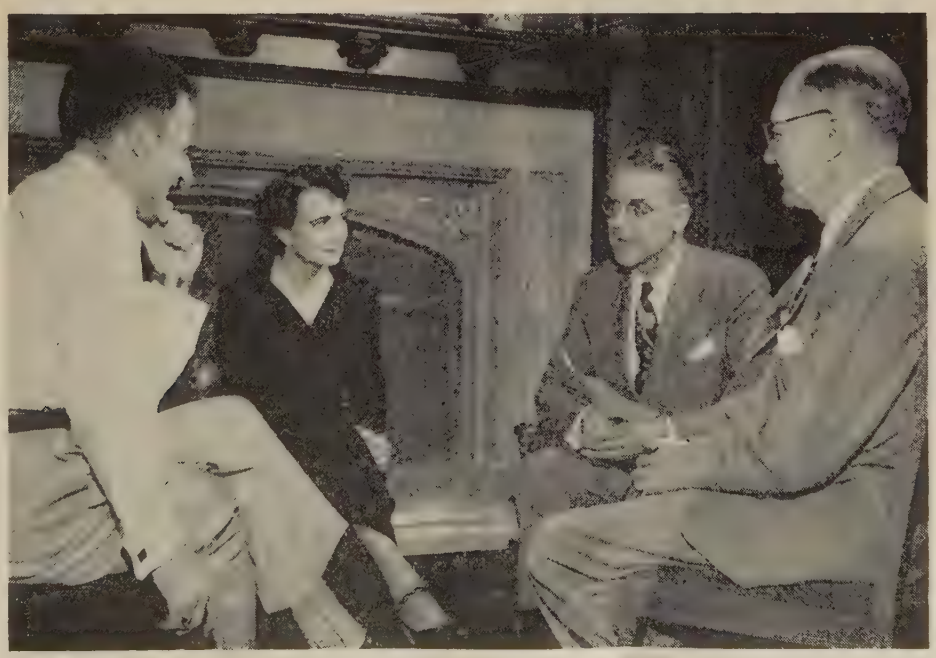
# *Spiritual Life Mission, November 28 will emphasize these*

# HABITS

*Tithing*

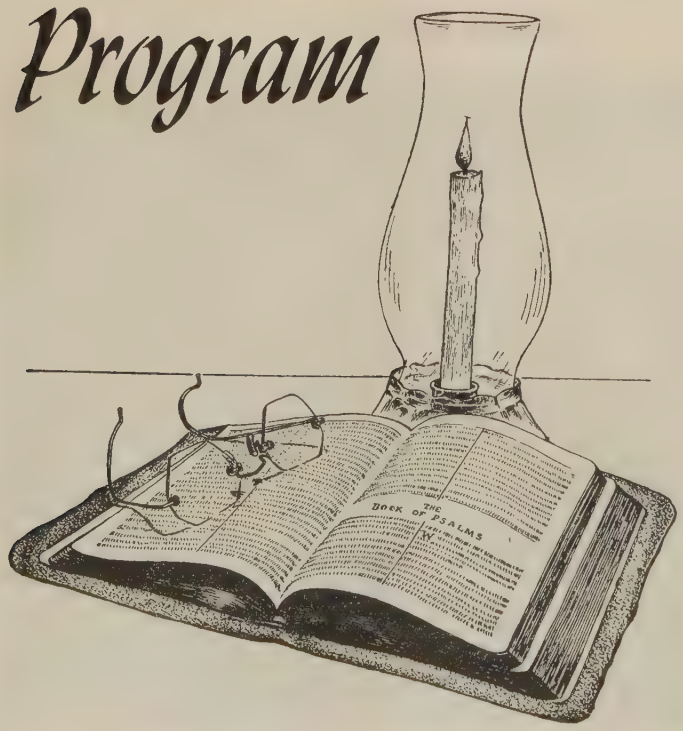
*Daily Bible Reading*

*Witnessing*



Three hundred and thirty-five cooperating churches will have Spiritual Life Missions during this week.

# United Presbyterians Feature The Bible In 18-Month Program




For its 18-month program ending on December 31, 1953, the United Presbyterian Church of North America has adopted as its official theme the phrase "Search the Scriptures." Emphasizing the Bible in this carefully planned endeavor to help pastors and people discover the Word anew, the Church has set forth in its Plan Book issued by Dr. A. E. Kelly, Executive Secretary, Board of Administration, the following principles which it has established as the basis for its denominational and congregational study of the Holy Book:

"Our Living Lord and Saviour would have us discover the Bible anew as:

—The inspired and enduring Word of God to us of the Body of Christ.
—The infallible and only Rule of Faith and Practice in the affairs of the Church and in the vocations of the personal life.
—The Good News of Salvation through Christ alone to be witnessed to by every Christian.
—The Great Commission, the Church's Timeless Mandate, to go and make disciples of all nations" (*Plan Book,* page 2).

To vitalize the Word in both pulpit and pew, the program suggests stimulating monthly themes for each local church to study. The following proposed topics, recommended for each of the 18 months, would make an outstanding sermon series for preachers of any denomination:

1952

July ..... "The Bible the Word of God"
August ..... "The Bible the Rule of Faith and Practice"
September ... "The Bible the Object of Daily Search"
October ..... "The Bible the Authority on Christian Stewardship"
November ... "The Bible for the Healing of the Nations"
December ... "The Bible the Story of the Word Made Flesh"

1953

January ..... "The Bible the Book of the Ages"
February .... "The Bible the Power of God unto Salvation"
March ..... "The Bible the Good News to be Proclaimed"
April ..... "The Bible the Christian's Assurance of Life Eternal"
May ..... "The Bible at the Heart of the Home"
June ..... "The Bible and the Children"
July ..... "The Bible the Message of God Today"
August ..... "The Bible the Truth That Makes Men Free"
September ... "The Bible the Church's Marching Orders"
October ..... "The Bible the Inspired Commentary on Giving"
November ... "The Bible the Light Shining in the Darkness"
December ... "The Bible the Blueprint of Peace on Earth"

Such emphasis upon the Scriptures will surely result in a deeper faith and a renewed vigor on the part of all who thus "rightly divide the Word of truth."

All pastors of the United Presbyterian Church of North America receive *Shepherds* at the request of A. E. Kelly, Executive Secretary.

# The Word of Life

## "The Word of Life"

These 29 readings were listed by 1,096 ministers as their favorite selections on this theme.

**NOVEMBER**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 27 | Thanksgiving | Psalms 103 |
| 28 | | Psalms 91 |
| 29 | | Psalms 121 |
| 30 | Sunday | Psalms 1 |

**DECEMBER**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | | Psalms 27 |
| 2 | | Psalms 46 |
| 3 | | Psalms 90 |
| 4 | | Isaiah 40 |
| 5 | | Isaiah 55 |
| 6 | | Matthew 5:1—26 |
| 7 | Sunday | Matthew 5:27—48 |
| 8 | | Matthew 6:1—18 |
| 9 | | Matthew 6:19—34 |
| 10 | | Matthew 7 |
| 11 | | John 14 |
| 12 | | John 15 |
| 13 | | John 17 |
| 14 | Universal Bible Sunday | Psalms 23 |
| 15 | | Luke 15 |
| 16 | | Romans 8 |
| 17 | | Romans 12 |
| 18 | | Ephesians 6 |
| 19 | | Philippians 4 |
| 20 | | Revelation 21 |
| 21 | Sunday | John 1:1—18 |
| 22 | | Isaiah 53 |
| 23 | | Hebrews 11 |
| 24 | | I Corinthians 13 |
| 25 | Christmas | Luke 2:1—20 |

*For those who want to continue reading the Bible during the last week of the year, these passages are recommended: Dec. 26, Luke 2:21-52; Dec. 27, John 1:19-51; Dec. 28, Matthew 2; Dec. 29, John 16; Dec. 30, Revelation 3; Dec. 31, Psalms 19.*

*Won't you make Bible reading a daily practice? Ask your minister for helps, write your church headquarters for lists or request our "Daily Bible Readings—1953" (U-139) from the*

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY, DEPT. U
450 Park Avenue, New York 22, N. Y.

HLR 15,000,000 U-133

*by James V. Claypool*

*Secretary*

*Promotion of Bible Use*

*American Bible Society*

The translation, publication, and distribution of the Scriptures for missionary and evangelization purposes at or below cost was entrusted by the Methodist Episcopal Church to the American Bible Society at the General Conference of 1820. During succeeding years Protestantism has come to depend upon the Society as the official service agency of all the churches.

### Use of the Bible

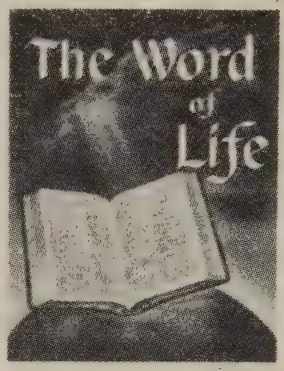
Only recently have Bible Societies anywhere become concerned with the question of the *use* of the Bible. As yet, our own American Bible Society is the only one in any nation to have an organized department, with a full-time secretary in charge, for promotion of the use of the Bible.

The most significant development for wider Bible reading is the emphasis which is being laid upon the use of the Bible in the British and Foreign Bible Society's preparations for the celebration, in 1954, of the Third Jubilee of this Society's work. The 150th anniversary will not only call to remembrance a glorious past, but also—and primarily—will underline the fundamental importance of Bible reading in the life of the individual Christian, of the Church, and of a nation. The sesquicentennial will go on from that to direct to the Bible and its message the masses whose godless and Christless search for "a new life" and "a new hope" is heading for disaster.

The Director of Christian Educa-

WORLDWIDE

## Bible Reading




**THANKSGIVING TO CHRISTMAS**
**1952**

**To Receive Help—**

I

Hold faithfully a stated daily period for Bible reading in which you have time to think seriously. Regular feeding develops spiritual strength.

II

Read carefully—not mechanically nor just from a sense of duty, but with mind alert, and if possible without interruption.

III

Read with expectation and delight, finding the personal message each day's passage has for you.

IV

Read prayerfully and slowly. Let God through the Bible speak directly to you. Your inner response to God's message is vital. When He condemns, accept penitently. When He offers help, place your hope on it. When He commands, obey. When He guides, follow.

V

Reread a statement which grips you. Work it into your life and pass it on. By your living out the truth you have received someone else will gain the benefit too.

VI

Memorize a key verse and repeat it during the day, or copy out a verse to carry and refer to throughout the day.

*For additional free copies of this bookmark, write*

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY, DEPT. U
450 Park Avenue, New York 22, N. Y.

tion of one of our Annual Conferences unburdened his heart in a recent letter wherein he lamented the fact that the celebration on September 30 of the issuance of the Revised Standard Bible would be fruitless unless harnessed to a program for more reading of the Book. To help achieve this purpose, the 30 favorite chapters of 1,096 Methodist ministers had already been culled, arranged, and circulated for reading from the September 30 observance through the World Wide Bible Reading period commencing on Thanksgiving, plus Universal Bible Sunday on December 14 and onward to the last day of 1952.

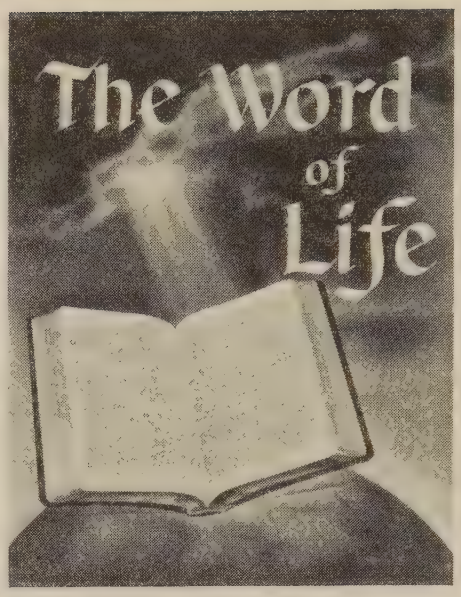
The Bible itself is its own best evangelist. There is incontrovertible evidence that the Holy Spirit employs the Bible not only in winning individual souls for Christ at all times and in all parts of the world, but also without human agency for the planting of churches.

### The Bible Speaks

Our present-day stress on personal evangelism should not exclude the work which the Bible itself can do in speaking directly to the souls of men, even in "closed lands." The Holy Spirit uses all these means, and not necessarily one more than another. Indeed, the ideal we should hold before ourselves is that of the Spirit working at one and the same time through the house of God, the man of God, and the Word of God.

Efforts might well be made among our Methodist congregations to secure and encourage men and women of earnest purpose, keen Christian experience, and evangelistic fervor to act as voluntary distributors of the Scriptures on a part-time basis or as an occasional service. Bible study, both personal and group, is of the highest value for evangelism. This applies not only to inquirers and new converts, but also to all engaged in evangelistic work, as well as to all church members who would enlarge their vision and deepen their motive.

One of the best evangelistic means of emphasizing the central importance of the Word of God in the life of every believer is the annual occurrence of Bible Sunday. Traditionally, the second Sunday in December or the second Sunday in Advent (they are sometimes one and the same) is found to be most suitable for the observance. In connection with this day for lifting up God's Word, a "Week of Witness" is recommended, in which preaching and distribution of the Scriptures is undertaken, especially by lay members. A plan for public reading of the New Testament or the entire contents of the Bible might be organized as an eventful part of such a "Week of Witness."




Above is a miniature reproduction of the poster used this year by the American Bible Society to promote Bible reading throughout the world.

Ministers who read the Scriptures at public worship may seize this time as an opportunity for self-analysis and self-improvement in reading audibly, devoutly, intelligibly, intelligently, and articulately. It is not improper to urge that expository preaching become a more or less regular practice with those who conduct public worship.

### In Many Languages

The Bible presents itself as an evangelist through translations which must be in language understood by the people.

### Russian Bibles Used

Although there has been no distribution of Bibles in Russia since 1947, the American Bible Society —a Methodist World Service Agency—receives a steady demand from Russian-speaking people now living in other lands for Scriptures in their language. Through the Paris office of the International Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association of the United States and Canada, the Bible Society made a grant of 1,000 Russian Bibles for distribution to Russian Orthodox displaced persons in that great cosmopolitan city and throughout France.

Hundreds of Bible men and women—some by pack-mule, some by camelback, some by outrigger canoes—are taking precious copies of the Scriptures to remote areas where their presence has been virtually forbidden.

From Addis Ababa has come the news that a Bible distributor who reached Aden sold among the Moslems in two months' time as many Scriptures as normally would be sold in a "near-eastern" bookstore in the same number of years. In countries such as Austria, Brazil, and Chile, the circulation of Scripture volumes was up by 50 per cent in the year just past. In Britain more printing firms are engaged in producing Scripture books than ever before during the 500 years since Gutenberg first used movable type. Last year's production in London alone was three times that of pre-war days.

The 50 Bible distributors in Japan—mostly bicycle-riders—are greatly responsible for the circulation of 3,000,000 Scriptures in a single year in that literate land. The New Testament has become by far the best seller in commercial bookstores. In Burma the circulation has increased by 60 per cent. Scriptures have continued to circulate in some countries behind the iron curtain. Importation in Poland, where local production has been forbidden, continues on quite a considerable scale.

In Guatemala circulation of whole Bibles increased 35 per cent last year. In Hongkong the total of 1,350,000 volumes printed in 1950 was increased to more than 1,900,000 copies in 1951 and evidently is passing the 2,000,000 mark this year. In Israel the circulation in 1951 was more than three times that of the previous year. In Hashemite Jordan, Amman, many shopkeepers place the open Bible in their windows, turning over a page each day.

The circulation of Korean Scriptures in 1951 exceeded 1,000,000 copies, about one-tenth of which were reserved for Korean refugees in Japan. The German soldiers who comprise nearly 80 per cent of the French Foreign Legion have had special illustrated Gospels provided for them. The increase in Mexico of 50 per cent over 1950 and 80 per cent over 1949 includes an added thrill: "It can be ascertained that 70 per cent of them went into the hands of non-evangelical people, the majority of whom profess the Roman Catholic faith." Behind such experiences there lies thorough and prayerful planning.

### Basic to Christian Work

All this circulation by National Bible Societies adds up to over 23,000,000

volumes, of which the Protestants of America provided the means to make available some 8,000,000 copies overseas and an equal number at home. Increasingly, Bible Society work, which is basic to Christian work everywhere, must become the concern of the whole Church and of all Christian people. People are not made Christian without Bibles. People do not remain Christian without Bibles. The Bible is not only the primary tool for evangelists and missionary workers; it is itself an evangelist when placed in the hands of God's children.


**New! Different!**

# Spiritual Life Evangelism Chart

## *"Strengthen Thy Brethren"*

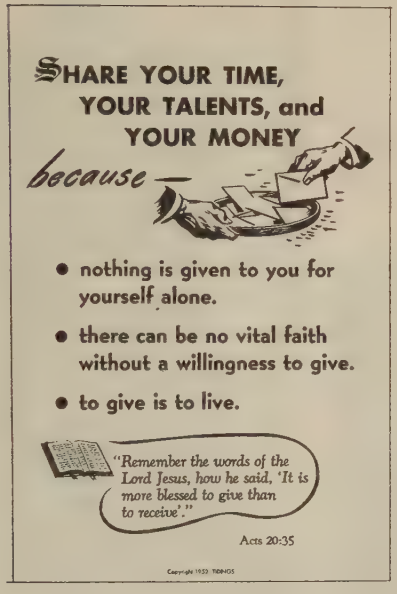
Professionally Prepared Under the Direction of G. Ernest Thomas

For Training Visitors in Successful Methods

*Of Reclaiming Inactive Members*

*Of Deepening the Loyalty of Every Member*

Essential for Your Spiritual Life Mission


SHARE YOUR TIME, YOUR TALENTS, and YOUR MONEY
because —
• nothing is given to you for yourself alone.
• there can be no vital faith without a willingness to give.
• to give is to live.
"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'."
Acts 20:35

**2 Colors!**

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State the purpose of your visit —
Today we are renewing our covenant to uphold the Church —
— by our prayers
— by our attendance
— by our gifts
— by our service
— by our Christian living
and . . . we would like to invite you to join us in this Spiritual Adventure.

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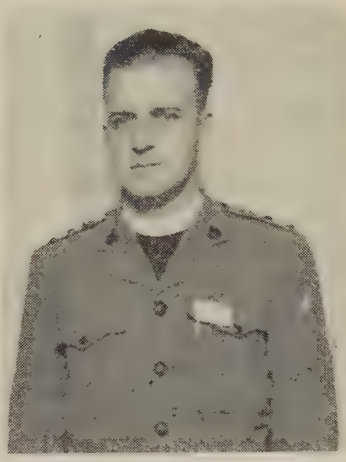
**TIDINGS, 1908 Grand Avenue, Nashville 4, Tennessee**

# *Whitby Conference on Evangelism*

Leaders in the program of evangelism in the United Church of Canada gathered at Ontario Ladies College, Whitby, Ontario, for an intensive refresher course in the motives and methods of the evangelistic program. It was under the guidance of Dr. J. R. Mutchmor, Secretary of the Board of Evangelism and Social Service. Shown above are most of the 200 in attendance. The United Church Board of Evangelism and Social Service officially endorses *The Upper Room*, and every pastor present reported that he uses it in his church.

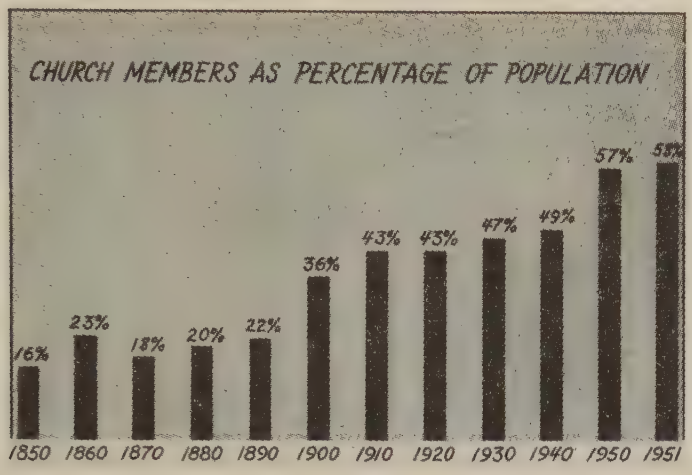
Speakers at the Whitby Conference on Evangelism included those shown below: Rev. C. Earle Gordan, Truro, Nova Scotia; Dr. Charles B. Templeton, well-known evangelist who has been speaking in the United States under the auspices of the National Council of Churches; Dr. J. R. Mutchmor, Secretary of the Board of Evangelism and Social Service; Mrs. Templeton, song leader; Rev. William G. Berry, Associate Secretary of the Board; Dr. Arthur W. Preston, Queensland, Australia, Director of the Crusade for Christ of the Methodist Church in Australia; Dr. James Semple, North Bay, Ontario; and Dr. J. Manning Potts, editor of *The Upper Room*.



An attendant at the conference was Chaplain Ray F. Webb, serving with the Canadian military forces at Camp Borden, Ontario. He reports that *The Upper Room* is an important aid to his ministry and, like chaplains in the United States military forces, finds *The Upper Room* the item of religious literature most in demand.

Representing the Woman's Missionary Society of the United Church at the Whitby Conference was Miss M. Louella Rork, who is home on furlough from her missionary duties in Japan. One of her duties in Japan is to help translate and prepare the Japanese edition of *The Upper Room*.

# Religion in The United States Outstripping Population!




Nearly three out of every five Americans are members of a church or other religious body. This is a new high in the history of the nation.

New statistics for 1951, recently made public by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., reveal that religious growth continues to outstrip the nation's growth in population.

At the end of 1951, religion had 88,673,005 adherents. This represents an increase of 1,842,515 over the previous year, or a growth of 2 per cent, compared with an estimated increase in population of 1.7 per cent. Between 1940 and 1950 church membership increased 34 per cent, while the population increased 15 per cent. Church members constitute 58 per cent of the population, as compared with 49 per cent in 1940 and 47 per cent in 1930.

The phenomenal growth of the churches is delineated more sharply by numbers. Church membership grew 22,000,000 during the 1940's, and only 5,000,000 during the 1930's.

"There is statistical evidence," said Dr. Benson Y. Landis, an official of the National Council of Churches and editor of the *Yearbook of American Churches,* published annually by the National Council, "that the people of the United States turned to the churches in a period of war, international crisis, and the atomic age—1940-1950—to a much greater extent than during either the depression years of the 30's or the relatively prosperous years of the 20's.

"Church membership has increased throughout the nation's history, and during the past 100 years has gone steadily upward, but never so rapidly as since 1940. During the past 11 years the annual gain has been about two per cent."

Other statistics for the 252 religious bodies in the continental United States also reflect the revival of religious interest among Americans. Between 1950 and 1951, the number of local churches rose from 281,511 to 284,592, and the number of church pastors from 166,891 to 181,123.

In reporting an increase of 40,000 active clergymen since 1940, Dr. Landis observed that, percentagewise, the increase of about 30 per cent has kept pace with the increased membership enrollment. Nevertheless, he said, there are thousands of vacant pulpits throughout the country. Seminaries report enrollment at the highest level in many years, but these are still insufficient to offset both the rapid growth in membership and the backlog of vacancies.

Encouragement for the future strength of the churches is seen by statisticians in the report on the nation's Sunday schools, in which 85 per cent of the enrollment is Protestant. The *Yearbook* reports 258,877 Sunday schools of all faiths, with 30,658,149 members.

This represents a gain of more than 900,000 members over the previous year, an amount about equal to the annual gain that has been evident since the Sunday school enrollment started a marked upward trend in 1947. Statistics also reveal that an army of 2,998,741 officials and teachers are required for religious education.

The nation's two largest religious groups, Protestant and Roman Catholic, reflected the general gain of 2 per cent in 1951. This continues a situation, Dr. Landis said, that has existed for more than 50 years in which these two religious groups have developed in about the same relation to one another. Numerically, Protestants, with 52,000,000 members, constitute the largest group. They have nearly twice as many as the Roman Catholics, who number 29,000,000.

Judaism is third, with 5,000,000. The Eastern Orthodox is fourth, with 1,858,000. The Old Catholic and Polish National Catholic is fifth, with 337,000, while Buddhism is sixth, with 73,000.

The statistical table for these groups follows:

| | Churches | Clergy Having Charges | Membership |
|---|---|---|---|
| Protestants | 258,775 | 161,884 | 52,162,432 |
| Roman Catholics | 20,443 | 15,653 | 29,241,580 |
| Jewish | 3,876 | 2,577 | 5,000,000 |
| Eastern Orthodox | 1,204 | 724 | 1,858,585 |
| Old Catholic and Polish Catholic | 247 | 285 | 337,408 |
| Buddhist | 47 | no report | 73,000 |
| Total | 284,592 | 181,123 | 88,673,005 |

The latest statistics show that while 88 million religiously minded Americans are identified with 252 religious groups, 98 per cent are concentrated in 70 groups.

Noting that most of these religious groups are Protestant,

Dr. Landis pointed out that the divisiveness never has been as great as generally believed. During the past half-century, the division has been considerably offset by two movements, one for organic unity, the other for cooperation. The former has resulted in the physical merger of several denominations, while the latter has brought about the formation of the National Council of Churches, now the largest religious organization in the United States. The National Council includes 29 denominations in a cooperative movement embracing 143,098 local churches, with total memberships of 33,691,852.

In the Protestant fellowship, the latest statistics reveal that there are 15 denominations with a membership of one million or more. The Methodist Church is first, with more than 9,000,000, followed by the Southern Baptist Convention with 7,373,000, and the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc., with 4,467,000.

Others in the first 10 are, in order, the National Baptist Convention of America, the Protestant Episcopal Church, Presbyterian U.S.A., United Lutheran Church in America, International Convention of the Disciples of Christ, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and the American Baptist Convention.

In addition to these 15 Protestant groups, there are only two others in the U.S. with membership of more than one million—the Roman Catholic Church and the Jewish Congregations.

No precise comparison is possible between Protestant and Roman Catholic figures. Most Protestant churches enumerate as members those persons who have attained full membership. Probably 90 to 95 per cent of Protestant members are over 13 years of age. Roman Catholics regard all baptized persons, including children, as members.

Since 1926, the total membership of Protestant churches increased from 31,511,701 to 52,162,432 in 1951. Comparing figures for 1951 with those of 1926, there was an increase of about 65 per cent.

Protestants were 27 per cent of the total population of continental United States in 1926; 33 per cent in 1950; and 34 per cent in 1951.

The membership of the Roman Catholic Church increased from 18,605,003 persons in 1926 to 28,634,878 in 1950, and 29,241,580 in 1951. From 1926 to 1951, there was an increase of 57 per cent.

Roman Catholics were 16 per cent of the population in 1926; 18 per cent in 1950; and 19 per cent in 1951.

The 17 religious bodies with memberships of one million or more are listed below in the order of their numerical strength.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Roman Catholic | 29,241,580 |
| 2. | The Methodist Church | 9,065,727 |
| 3. | Southern Baptist Convention | 7,373,498 |
| 4. | Jewish Congregations | 5,000,000 |
| 5. | National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc. | 4,467,779 |
| 6. | National Baptist Convention of America | 2,645,789 |
| 7. | Protestant Episcopal Church | 2,417,464 |
| 8. | Presbyterian Church U.S.A. | 2,364,112 |
| 9. | United Lutheran Church in America | 1,925,506 |
| 10. | International Convention of the Disciples of Christ | 1,792,985 |
| 11. | Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod | 1,674,901 |
| 12. | African Methodist Episcopal Church | 1,166,301 |
| 13. | American Baptist Convention | 1,554,304 |
| 14. | Congregational Christian Churches | 1,241,477 |
| 15. | Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints | 1,111,314 |
| 16. | Churches of Christ | 1,000,000 (?) |
| 17. | Greek Orthodox Church (Hellenic) | 1,000,000 (?) |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Ground Your People in the Basic Doctrines of Your Church

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by Paul E. Folkers

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5c each; $4.00 per 100

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from the 1952 Episcopal Address

A 2-color, 16-page, illustrated brochure, written in very readable and easily understood style, presenting the major teachings of "the people called Methodists." Should be placed in every Methodist home.

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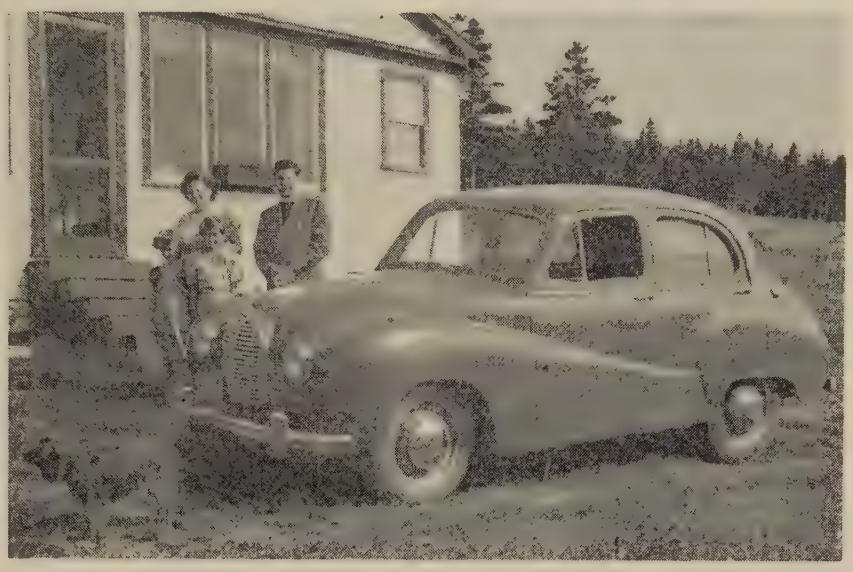
1908 Grand Avenue TIDINGS Nashville 4, Tennessee

# Canadian Churches Make *The Upper Room* a Regular Part of Their Ministry to Members

Combining a business and vacation trip into Eastern Canada, Dr. J. Manning Potts, editor of *The Upper Room*, got firsthand information of the wide use of *The Upper Room* not only in the United Church of Canada, but in the Baptist and Presbyterian Churches also. Dr. W. D. Van Zoost (above), pastor of the Central United Church in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, is enthusiastic about the ministry of *The Upper Room*.

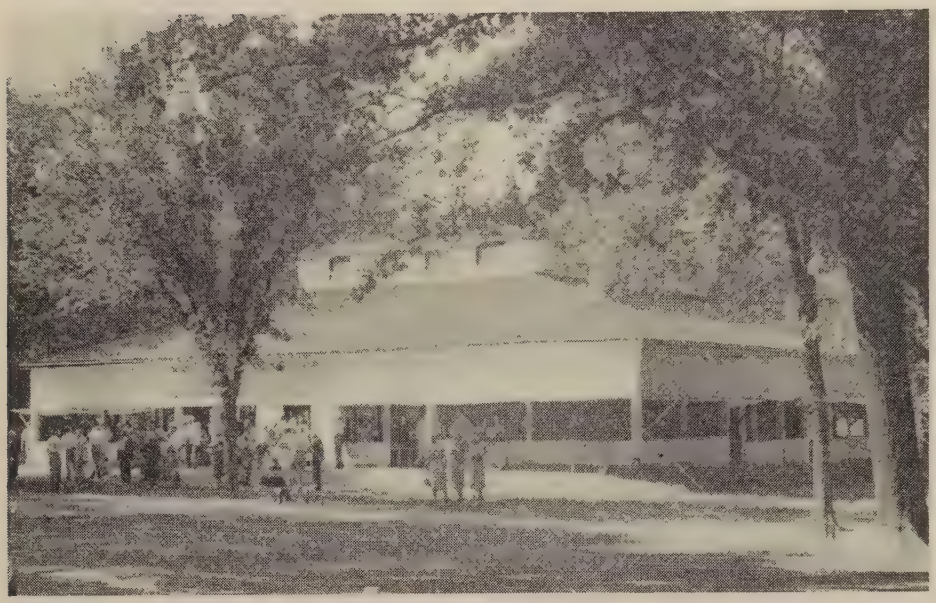


Rev. Harold A. Kennedy takes copies of *The Upper Room* as he visits his parishioners at Indianboat, Nova Scotia.

On another Sunday Dr. Potts attended Knox Presbyterian Church at Glace Bay, Nova Scotia, and found four Canadian pastors, all of whom make *The Upper Room* a part of their ministry. Shown in the picture are Rev. J. Parker Methewson, United Church, Upper Stewiacke, Nova Scotia; Rev. Stewart MacLeod, Knox Presbyterian Church, Glace Bay, Nova Scotia; Dr. H. H. Bagnall, United Church, Hamilton, Ontario; and Rev. Stanley G. MacQueen, United Church, Woodstock, New Brunswick.

Three Methodist ministers met at the worship service on a Sunday morning at St. John's United Church, Dalhousie, New Brunswick. Two of them, J. F. Winkelblech, pastor of the Kulpmont Methodist Church, Kulpmont, Pennsylvania (left), and Paul H. Watts, pastor of the Prospect Methodist Church, Gatchelville, Pennsylvania, are shown with the pastor, J. N. MacLean, in his pulpit. J. Manning Potts, the third visiting minister, snapped the picture.

# E. U. B. Family Life Conference Emphasizes Family Devotion



Under the auspices of the Iowa Conference, the Evangelical United Brethren Church held a Family Life Conference at their assembly in Riverview Park at Cedar Falls, Iowa. The importance of family devotions received repeated emphasis and a show of hands indicated that virtually everyone in attendance was a regular user of *The Upper Room*. The group of several hundred attendants at the conference who stayed on the grounds was augmented by visitors from nearby communities who came for special sessions. Speakers included: Bishop C. A. Stauffacher; Dr. Paul E. Keen, of the Evangelical Theological Seminary of Naperville, Ill.; Dr. Roy D. Miller, of Bonebrake Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio; and J. Manning Potts, editor of *The Upper Room*. Dr. Potts gave the inspirational addresses.

Near Riverview Park is the Western Old People's Home, which is under the auspices of The Evangelical United Brethren Church. The superintendent, Dr. George A. Stauffacher (brother of Bishop Stauffacher), reports that *The Upper Room* is used regularly for the morning devotions. This picture, showing Dr. Stauffacher standing in front of the building, was taken by Dr. Potts.


*The Upper Room Pulpit*
J. MANNING POTTS
EDITOR

December, 1952



He Discovered Something
RAYMOND E. BOLCOMB
Sellwood Methodist Church
Portland, Oregon

The Sin of Preoccupation
ARTHUR V. BOAND
Highland Park Presbyterian Church, Dallas, Texas

Building for Life
JOHN J. BUNTING, JR.
Newark Methodist Church, Newark, Delaware

Reading the Bible Today
J. PHILIP HYATT
Professor of Old Testament, Vanderbilt School of Religion

Does Christmas Matter?
NORMAN A. McMURRAY
Wesley United Church, Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Stop the Car!
LESLIE STEPHENSON
Beauchief Baptist Church, Sheffield, England

Surveying or Sharing Life
CHRIS H. TICE
The Methodist Church, Launceston Circuit, Cornwall, England

There's a Sermon There

I Heard a Preacher Say

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**THE UPPER ROOM PULPIT**
1908 Grand Ave. Nashville 4, Tenn.

# The Pastor's Use of Tracts

*Reprinted by courtesy of the American Tract Society, this article is available in booklet form from the Society.*

By J. Charles Pelon

Our subject bears at least two significant implications. The first is that tracts can be of some use to a pastor in his local church ministry. To the validity of this claim my own experience as a minister of the gospel of Christ bears witness, and I shall presently suggest a number of ways in which tracts may be used effectively by the pastor of any local church.

The second implication is that the pastor is, or should be, his own evangelist. The word "pastor" is derived from "pascere," to feed, and signifies a shepherd, one who feeds his flock; therefore, he is a guardian, or keeper of souls, a spiritual overseer, one who guides and tends and nurtures a company of Christ's sheep. But the faithful pastor feels, also, the compulsion of Christ to preach salvation to the lost. He is always under the kindly constraint of his Lord to go out into the highways and the byways with God's message of redemption in Christ to those who have not yet heard the King's invitation nor heeded Christ's call. Who better than the local pastor, knowing the field and the people, and possessing a heart burning for the souls of men, can serve as evangelist, bearer of good news, to those around him?

Now I submit that for both of these aspects of his ministry—feeding the flock of God committed to his care and reaching the unchurched and the unsaved in his own community—the pastor needs the aid of tracts.

## Tracts in Pastoral Visitation

First of all, tracts may be most effectively used in pastoral visitation. This is equally true whether the visit is conducted in the pastor's study, in the home of the parishioner, in a hospital room, or in any other public institution where the individual may be confined. Often the oral visit does not go far enough. The depths are not probed, either for lack of time, lack of privacy, lack of understanding, or lack of skill in dealing with individuals. The printed leaflet, if wisely chosen, may carry forward the interview and lead to conviction. At any rate, it goes with the person interviewed and remains as a kind of spiritual deposit from the experience with his pastor.

Nowhere is this more true than in a pastor's call upon hospitalized parishioners. The mind of the patient is open, and the heart is often tender. During convalescence the patient has the time, and is in the mood, for reading and reflection. It is the pastor's golden opportunity for spiritual seed-sowing.

We ministers are often told that there is no substitute for ringing doorbells. While this may be true, every city pastor is discouraged by the number of bells daily rung in vain and the flights of stairs climbed only to find no one at home. Here the tract, dropped in the mailbox or slipped under the door, performs an invaluable service. Besides bringing its own message, it gives the word that the messenger has called. It speaks for the one who speaks for God. The tract thus quietly left in the home becomes a witness to the whole family that the pastor has called and has sought in his own way to communicate Christ's life and love to the home.

Furthermore, the printed message often reaches the heart of the indifferent or absent member and is the silent means of turning his thought Godward. So it may lead him back to the privilege and responsibility of Christian fellowship. Not infrequently the influence of such a messenger reaches across corridors, or fences, or the loneliness that separates hospital beds, to cheer and comfort a discouraged or sorrowing neighbor.

## Tracts for the Pastor's Correspondence

Another effective channel for the use of appropriate tracts is a pastor's correspondence. A pastor must write many letters. Often he must write for the church the administrative or financial letters which are addressed to the whole congregation or constituency. Such formal letters are often lacking in personal touch or spiritual emphasis.

A tract appropriate to the season of the Christian year can be inserted in such a letter, at slight additional work and cost, with surprising results. A message from the financial officers of the church can be undergirded by including a vital leaflet on Christian stewardship. A letter from the officials of the church will be greatly reinforced by a carefully chosen tract designed to enrich the whole spiritual life of the church family.

The pastor's letter to his membership class and to all others uniting with the church should contain one or more items of helpful reading matter, such as shall serve to confirm each person in his commitment and offer immediate challenge for Christian service and growth.

A pastor's correspondence includes, also, his frequent letters to military personnel and to members of his flock who are temporarily out of his immediate pasture, as it were. These proverbial letters from home mean much; but so does each enclosure, and no letter from the church or the pastor to a young man or woman in uniform should go without its appropriate enclosures. These silent messengers often reach the soldier's heart and are priceless in bearing fruit for the Kingdom.

## Tracts in Larger Church Projects

In a recent interdenominationally cooperative religious census of one of the new municipal housing projects, 35 volunteers gave to every family, in addition to the regular publicity items, a copy of the Psalms. While the whole book of the Psalms may hardly be regarded as a tract, it was chosen with a view to winning the initial good will of all the tenants, whatever their faith, and to eliciting their cooperation in the religious census. Later, one of the cooperating churches organized its own follow-up to these same tenants and enclosed with its letter of invitation a gospel tract of distinctly evangelical character and import. The fruits of this effort are still accruing to the local church, and the pastor is being continu-

ally confronted with opportunities for a more personal ministry.

Limitations of space prevent detailed exposition of many other areas for the effective use of tracts in the local church, such as the church school, the weekday and vacation schools for Christian education, and the missionary and young people's organizations. One might also mention various devices for the distribution of tracts in the local church, such as tract receptacles on the back of pews, literature tables, and tract racks. Church officers may personally distribute important and timely printed messages at the conclusion of the service of worship. The alert pastor will be aware of these and other opportunities.

### Hints for the Pastor's Use of Tracts

Having indicated a number of ways in which a local pastor's ministry may be extended by employment of the printed page, let me conclude by setting down a few practical hints in the pastor's use of tracts.

1) *Cultivate the use of tracts in your pastoral ministry.* It will greatly widen the scope of your influence beyond the reach of your spoken word and your personal contact.

2) *Use only attractive tracts.* These are days of keen competition. Consequently, the message needs an arresting title, must be concise and convincing, must be couched in forceful, imaginative, and dramatic terms, and must be printed in clear, readable type on good quality paper.

3) *Know your tracts.* Read a tract before you use it. Expect no one to read a message which you have not read yourself. There will be no blessing in it for someone else if you have not first mined the blessing for yourself.

4) *Choose the right tract for the right person.* Not all tracts are appropriate for all occasions and all needs. A wrongly chosen tract may do more harm than good by causing offense or leading to confusion. Be wisely discriminating in the choice and use of tracts.

5) *Cultivate variety in the use of tracts.* Avoid getting into a rut, either in terms of the type of tract used or in the manner of using printed messages. Be alert to progress in this field. Watch for new and interesting subjects.

6) *Follow your tracts with personal interest and prayer.* Make inquiry of the recipient. Was the tract read? Did it take root? Did it lead to decision?

7) *Encourage others in the wise use of tracts.* This will open up a new and rewarding field for many inarticulate and otherwise ineffective Christians. Church officers, consecrated laymen, faithful women, and young people who are dedicated to the Lord can be used in this ministry with tremendous advantage to the local church, not to speak of the supremely important good that will accrue to the workers themselves in the joy of winning others to the Saviour.

This, then, is the simple testimony of one who for 20 years has enriched his own personal life and his parish ministry by the use of tracts. If we believe that the pen is mightier than the sword, let us, in this day of "swords loud clashing," rededicate ourselves to the wise and zealous dissemination of the printed word of truth.


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## Handy Order Blank for "Give God A Chance" Materials

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|---|---|---|
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| _____ | **COVENANT CARD,** for individuals to sign, pledging regular church attendance and Bible reading. 60¢ per 100 | _____ |
| _____ | **POSTERS** (22"x34") for church vestibules, bulletin boards, etc. 2 colors. 10¢ each; 6 for 50¢ | _____ |
| _____ | **WINDOW CARDS** (11"x8½") for display in merchants' windows, public places, even homes. 5¢ each; 12 for 50¢ | _____ |
| _____ | **STICKERS** (about 4"x3") gummed for use on car windows, front doors, living room windows of home. 50¢ per 100 | _____ |
| _____ | **STICKERS** (about 2"x1½") gummed for use on letterheads, etc. 50¢ per 100 | _____ |
| _____ | **STAMPS** (about 1½"x1") sheets of stamps, 100 to a sheet, like large postage stamps, for use on letterheads and envelopes. 25¢ per sheet | _____ |
| _____ | **MATS** (1 column) for use in newspaper and other publicity (about same size as top of page) 25¢ each | _____ |
| _____ | **MATS** (2 column) for use in newspaper and other publicity (about 4"x3") 25¢ each | _____ |
| _____ | **POST CARDS** (3¼"x5½") for separate mailing, enclosure in pastoral letters, or direct handing to members and constituents urging them to "Give God A Chance" and become a part of the movement. 60¢ per 100 | _____ |
| _____ | **LETTERHEADS** (8½"x11") with "Give God A Chance" heading. These may be used with the pastor's own message to his members to launch the movement. 75¢ per 100 | _____ |
| _____ | **PRINTED LETTERS** with an appeal for your people to "Give God A Chance" $1.00 per 100 | _____ |
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**ADDRESS**

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**Address**

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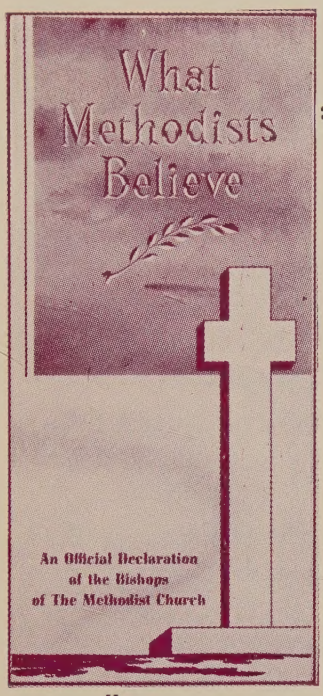


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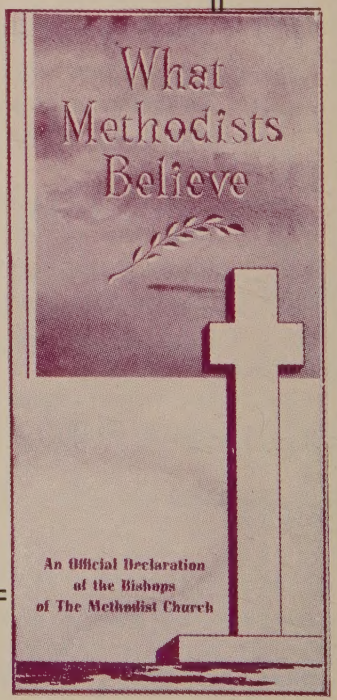
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We Believe in the Holy Spirit — We Believe in the Bible
We Believe in Man — We Believe in Salvation
We Believe in Christian Experience
We Believe in Christian Perfection — We Believe in the Church
We Believe in the Kingdom of God
We Believe in Divine Judgment — We Believe in Eternal Life